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ISSUE 267 OCTOBER 2013
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blows whistle
on GMO

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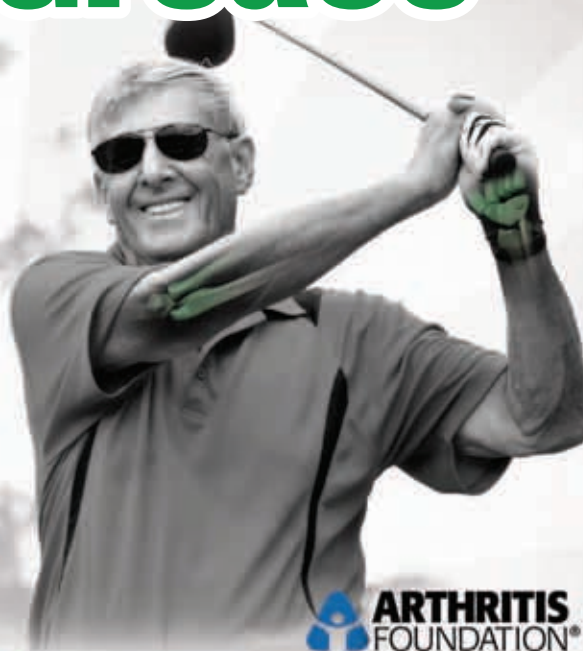


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Greed and corruption make very small things go very bad: Fukushima's atomic radiation and genetically engineered genes jumping species. Genes get "modified," i.e. manipulated, then monopolized in a greedy corporate take-over tricking us into food slavery. These biotech pirates deceive and plunder while promising to eliminate misery. Find out what is really going on. Join millions worldwide at the March Against Monsanto on October 12. Hear talks by courageous whistleblowers Drs. Thierry Vrain and Shiv Chopra during their Canada-wide "No GMO" tour. *Common Ground* co-hosts their Vancouver speaking engagement on November 19. Details inside.



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*Reference: Anti-Influenza virus activities of commercial oregano oils and their carriers. Journal of Applied Pharmaceutical Science 2012; 02(07): 214-18.



Dr. Thierry Vrain

GMO spokesman turned GMO whistleblower followed the science

interview by Tsiporah Grignon

Dr. Thierry Vrain, a former soil biologist and genetic scientist, worked for Agriculture Canada for 30 years. He was the designated spokesperson to assure the public of the safety of GMO crops. Since retiring 10 years ago, after taking into account scientific evidence ignored by most of the bio-tech industry promoters and government regulators, Dr. Vrain has reversed that position and now warns of the dangers from GMOs.

Tsiporah Grignon: Was there a pivotal event when you reversed your position on GMOs?

Dr. Thierry Vrain: As a scientist working for the government, I didn't question the status quo or dogma. I just did my work and was the person designated from the institute to reassure the public, so I was very busy. When I retired, my wife and I began an organic farm where I started to discover new things about soil biology never taught in graduate school. Not being on the payroll anymore, I had the freedom to read different sources and look at genetic engineering from new perspectives. That is how I first became aware of the possibility that GMOs were not all rosy and perfect.

Q: It is astounding that people don't question the very idea of altering DNA. When Monsanto or others claim a genetically modified organism is "substantially equivalent" to the conventional plant, it's illogical to me because when DNA is altered, the plant is altered. It's not the same and it's certainly not natural.

A: That depends on your view of the world. As a scientist, when you add a bacteria gene to a plant, or a plant gene to a fish, or a human gene to corn, or 10,000 acres of corn growing insulin – they consider it progress. So if a tomato plant has a bacterial gene, it still looks very much like a tomato plant. You couldn't tell very much from the taste of the tomato so there is something easy about believing in "substantial equivalence."

Q: What do you think of Big Biotech claims that they have the answer to feeding the world, increasing crop yields, decreasing use of pesticides and herbicides, and lowering costs?

A: Charles Benbrook, head of the Union of Concerned Scientists from California, who put together the statistics from the USDA to see if there was an increase in yield, discovered that there is no increase in yield, and, in fact, there is a slight decrease, that some of the engineered crops are not as good as the conventional crops. Herbicide use is actually increasing. People are really concerned because there are now Super Weeds resistant to this technology. The GE herbicide is basically useless

when the weeds become resistant. This was predicted 25 years ago. Same thing happened with insect resistance. It builds up, so if there is a saving of insecticide today, it will disappear in the next few years. Farmers are now encouraged to spray insecticide on the Bt crops so the insects don't become resistant to the particular genetically engineered technology... it's madness!

Q: As a soil biologist, what are the effects of GMO crops on the soil?

A: Roundup (Monsanto's herbicide) is a chelator; it holds manganese, magnesium and a few other minerals.

It holds the minerals and doesn't let go so basically it starves the plant. It probably also starves many other creatures in the soil, but I don't think that is documented.

Q: Have you read Prof. Huber's research on glyphosate, a main active ingredient in Monsanto's Roundup herbicide?

A: Don Huber studied the effect of Roundup on the decrease of nutrients in the plant. I spent time with him two years ago so I am reasonably familiar with what he has written. There is something interesting about your question about the GMO

plant's effect on the soil. The GMO plant is a plant with a new gene that has been inserted somewhere and usually with a gene that makes for the trait, e.g. a bacterial gene that would make a protein that could kill caterpillars. But when you engineer a plant, it is a random process. You need a way to select for the cells to be engineered because not every cell is engineered. And until very recently, the way to do that was to insert another gene (at least the gene you want), an antibiotic resistant gene, usually bacterial genes. And that antibiotic resistance gene is in the genome; it's in the roots, it can go into the soil, so that can be picked up by the bacteria in the soil. There is a publication out of China, from the University of Szechuan, where researchers have shown that every river in the sample contained antibiotic resistance gene that, in all probability, came from the local transgenic plants.

Q: What did The Human Genome Project discover?

A: In the cells of every living organism are three major kinds of molecules: carbohydrates made by plant photosynthesis from sunlight and lipids and proteins. The carbs and lipids don't move; they just sit there. The proteins do the work because they move. Every molecule of protein can twitch, make a movement, and that twitch can do something. That molecule can twitch another molecule and affect something in the cell and that's what proteins do. Proteins are what make life because life is movement. So when you want to engi-

neer a plant what you are actually doing is engineering a protein in the plant so that the protein will do something new in the plant, such as herbicide or insect resistance.

The Human Genome Project was finished in 2002. It took 10 years to sequence the whole genome of a person. The whole genome was deciphered. That was a very important point because the human body functions with about 100,000 proteins. It's been well known since the late 1940s that DNA calls for proteins and the hypothesis of the 1940s was the "one gene, one protein hypothesis." The dogma of molecular biology for the last 70 years was that each gene calls for a protein. So they believed if you have 100,000 proteins in your body, you will have 100,000 genes or more. Except when the Human Genome Project was completed we realized we only have 20,000 genes in our body. So 20,000 genes can make (causes the creation of) 100,000 proteins? The math does not add up and that's what I am referring to. In fact, in 2002, the dogma of the one gene one protein hypothesis became null and void; it just doesn't work that way.

What we discovered was that the genome of any living organism is a much more complex eco-system where 95% of the DNA is actually regulating the other 5% of that code for proteins. OK, you have a new DNA, about 5% of the DNA that is actually coding for protein in the genes. The rest is all kinds of DNA we have no idea how it works. When I was in graduate school, and later as a genetic engineer, it was called Junk DNA [laughter]. When you engineer a plant, you put a gene in the plant. That gene is going to make a protein. And that gene can go anywhere in the plant because you have no control. It goes anywhere in the genome, anywhere in the chromosome. And that gene is now under a regulatory sequence that it was not naturally regulated by before.

There are a good number of studies now showing that engineered plants have proteins that are quite different than the proteins that are expected, so-called rogue proteins. These proteins are truncated; they are different. They might function as a protein to kill caterpillars, for example. Or they might not. But they are different and that difference has not been investigated. Basically, the dogma is you put in a gene and you get the protein you want. So much so that the regulatory agencies, when they want to test for the safety of genetically engineered crops, all they need to show is that the protein that was inserted into the plant is safe, but they don't go and test the new protein actually created in the plant.

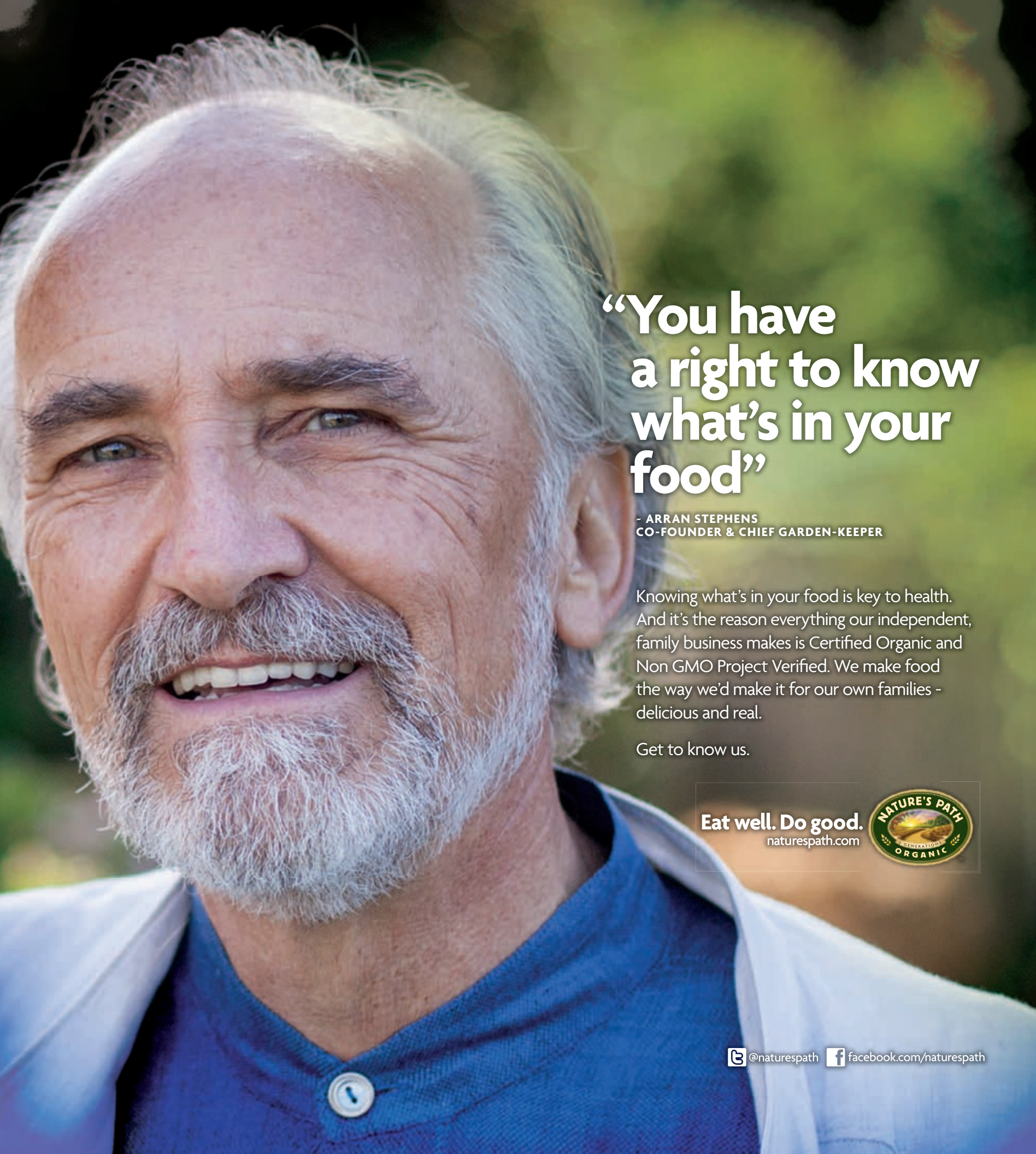
Q: So unintended consequences are not even looked at, never mind ignored.

A: Completely.

Q: So how can they get away with calling GMOs safe?

A: Before the Human Genome Project, there was the one gene, one protein theory. Scientists simply thought you take a gene from a bacteria and put it in another bacteria, that you will get the protein you want and the effect you want. So it's considered *continued p.38...*





**“You have
a right to know
what’s in your
food”**

~ ARRAN STEPHENS
CO-FOUNDER & CHIEF GARDEN-KEEPER

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GMO OMG

Is this the end of real food?

by Jeremy Seifert



How we eat determines, to a considerable extent, how the world is used. – Wendell Berry

When people first hear just the basic facts concerning genetically modified organisms (GMOs or genetically engineered foods) – the DNA of seeds altered with genes from other organisms like bacteria so food crops can withstand herbicides that will kill all other plants, patented by giant chemical companies and found in 80% of processed foods – the standard response is “Oh, my God.” For some, it’s just an exclamation, but for others, I imagine, it’s the beginnings of a prayer. There’s a mixture of horror and disbelief, as if finding out we’re living inside a very strange sci-fi novel. Beyond that, it’s the sting of humiliation from being ignorant about something so big, mixed with the anger that comes from feeling like you’ve been duped.

Even without understanding what a GMO is or why it matters, most of us believe, as citizens of a supposedly free and democratic society, that we have the

right to know if they are in the food we eat. The fact we don’t know and that our right to know has been taken away by corporate greed and government collusion, should upset and mobilize people. When all the food and seed and water and air is owned and patented by giant multinational corporations, will we even protest? Do we have the wakefulness and willpower to take that first step and stand up for this basic right?

That central question is why a tiny story from Haiti impacted me so deeply and inspired me to make a film about this hidden takeover of our food and the world’s seeds. Months after the horrific earthquake that levelled Port-au-Prince, 10,000 rural farmers marched in the streets against Monsanto. In the midst of their hardships, these farmers rejected seeds donated to Haiti by the giant agrochemical company, crying out “Down with Monsanto!” They symbolically burned Monsanto’s seeds, which represented slavery, debt and the extinction of their own seeds and way of life. They stood unified in their fight for food sovereignty and native seeds as a common inheritance of all humanity.

I kept asking myself, “What do they know that

we don’t?” Having long suffered, they possess courage and conviction that we have never even begun to arouse in ourselves. We haven’t known that we needed this courage or conviction because most of us didn’t even realize there was a fight on our hands for the future of food, our right to choose and the health of the environment and our families.

After a long drive north from the ruins and tent cities of Port-au-Prince into the treeless mountains, and then hours further to Hinche and Papaye, I remember my very first conversation with Jean-Baptiste Chavannes, the leader of the Peasant Movement of Papaye (MPP). He began with a big smile on his face, saying, “The objective of Monsanto is to make money. The objective of Monsanto is not the quality of food that people are eating. Monsanto’s objective is not to protect life. It’s not to protect the environment.”

Chavannes’ smile then disappeared, replaced with passion and urgency. “When people like me say these types of seeds are poisonous, when I say these seeds are destroying the life of the land and destroying the people, that’s when I attack the interest of Monsanto.”

He cut to the heart of the issue and it was right there in the open for everyone to see. The agrochemical industry spews lies just like the lead and tobacco industries did before them and we believe them until the truth finally bursts forth, usually from the work of brave scientists, researchers, professors and activists who risk their careers and reputations to go against the status quo.

Monsanto says they’re all about farmers and yet the company has sued hundreds in court and bullied thousands with its mass of lawyers and private investigators. The biotech industry says we need GMOs for higher yield, and we need that higher yield to feed the world, but, for anyone paying attention, that is the furthest thing from the truth. The facts on the ground show that GMOs don’t actually increase yields, and 30 years of peer-reviewed research from the Rodale Farming Systems trial shows that organic farming can match their yields and do even better in times of flood and drought ... all without toxic chemicals, synthetic fertilizers and patents.

We also know that the wealthiest countries waste almost half of the food they produce, meaning that the world produces enough food to feed nearly 14 billion people *right now*. And it’s no secret that most GMOs go into making the worst food on the planet, devoid of the nutrients we need for real health, or into ethanol production – not into feeding the poor. But they tell the lie so well, exploiting the poor to prey on our

illustration by Kris Kozak

emotions, that most of us believe it without looking beyond their slick 30-second advertisements.

Are we surprised the industry is lying to us? A giant corporation only focused on profit and securing markets for further growth is almost beholden to itself and its shareholders to lie if lying means profit. I don't want to become a jaded, pessimistic person, always thinking the worst, but I also don't want to be a fool. And not being a fool in the current climate of "corpora-



Our right to know has been taken away by corporate greed and government collusion.

ocracy" means assuming that giant corporations monopolizing the market are probably lying to us and abusing power. That isn't being cynical; it's just common sense.

Chavannes wasn't deceived by the promises of increased yield and profit, miracle seeds and wonder chemicals. He knew, as we all know, that these companies aren't asking themselves, "What's good for this society, for people's health, for the earth?" No, the questions they are asking are, "What will increase profit? How can we produce

more in a shorter amount of time, eliminate competition, ensure repeat customers and make more money?"

The new reality of the world is that giant chemical companies are feeding us and our families. And those questions of profit and growth are the ones they're paying attention to, not the ones concerning you or your family or this land we all share and live on.

Maybe corporate greed and corruption aren't enough to deter people from a cheap hamburger because, well, there will always be selfish monsters abusing power, but we still have to eat, right? Perhaps the death of the family farmer under the current paradigm of big industry and corporate consolidation within the food system doesn't really hit home enough to make a change?

But I would hope that the potential health risks would at least cause parents to stop feeding their children GMOs until all the data is in. Long-term, independent studies show damage to rat livers and kidneys when fed an exclusive GMO grain diet and new findings link Monsanto's "Roundup" weed killer to Parkinson's disease and cancer.

With peer-reviewed, independent studies coming out with real results that contradict the industry's short-term studies, it seems safe to say all is not well with this genetically altered food. Should we really allow *continued p.28...*



FREE LECTURE

The Dynamic Duo for Fighting Heart Disease with **W. GIFFORD-JONES, MD**

W. Gifford-Jones, MD is a graduate of the University of Toronto and The Harvard Medical School. His weekly medical column is published by 70 Canadian newspapers and reaches six million readers.



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Drug Bust Alan Cassels

HEALTH

Briefing Notes on Prescription Drugs

Do we need vaccines?

Sanitation and clean water prove to be effective alternatives

“Vaccines saved more Canadian lives over the past 50 years than any other medical intervention.” That’s the bold headline on an advertisement for BIOTEC Canada and the 16 members of its Vaccine Industry Committee, made up of “global leaders in vaccine research and innovation,” from the country’s biggest pharmaceutical companies.

These are vaccine marketers so they have a stake in keeping aloft the notion that investments in vaccine research are important so we can continue to get needed vaccines to improve the health of Canadians. They tell us “Canadian innovation is driving the discovery of new vaccines that will transform the future of public health in Canada.”

Is it true that vaccines have “saved more lives” than any medical intervention? How vital are they in allowing us to live longer and healthier lives? When describing advances in vaccine research BIOTEC Canada singles out two particular vaccines: One to reduce the risk of cervical cancer (the HPV vaccine) and the other to reduce the risk of gastroenteritis (the rotavirus vaccine), which is responsible for a lot of diarrhea and death in the developing world.

Six years ago, the *British Medical Journal* ran a contest asking readers to vote for what they thought was the most important public health advance in the last 150 years. Vaccines appeared on the ‘top 15 list’ and the editorial proposing its inclusion cited polio, whooping cough and measles as three major diseases that have all been tamed by vaccine programs. Yet the advance people voted as #1, however, was not a medical innovation at all: it was toilets. Which is to say, advances in sanitation and the role of clean water in human health topped the list.

The biotech industry is not alone in claiming vaccines have been a major tool in the prevention of many deadly illnesses. Public health officials seem eternally eager to urge all parents to get onboard with the full suite of recommended childhood vaccines for all our children, as well as carrying out somewhat unsavoury mandatory flu programs for health workers.

In his book, *Fooling Ourselves on the Fundamental Value of Vaccines*, Australian author Greg Beattie lays out a very interesting case, mostly using graphs, which will make many people wonder if the value of vaccine programs has been exaggerated. His book closely examines the timing of vaccine programs, compared to changes in death rates due to a range of vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles, mumps and rubella. He says that the major drops in those deaths predated vaccine programs, sometimes by a lot. So something else was happening that caused a dramatic drop in deaths due to these diseases 40 to 50 years ago, before these vaccines were routinely given to children. What could it have been? You guessed it – improvements in sanitation, nutrition and general medical improvements (better diagnosis, etc). Did vaccines help? Maybe. But if they did, Beattie would argue it wasn’t by much.

Diarrhea is still considered a major killer of children under five in the developing world and vaccines tackling the rotavirus that sometimes causes it have been developed. Diarrheal deaths have been reduced markedly over the last 20 years, but there are still about half a million children every year around the world who die from dehydration and diarrhea, mostly in the developing world. Yet the US Centre for Disease Control estimates only about 20 to 60 children die in the US each year from complications due to rotavirus.

But when you try to tease out the effects of vaccines like that for rotavirus, they are hard to find. Why? Because the major reductions in diarrhea are due to better sanitation, use of oral-rehydration therapies (we have much better knowledge now

on treating severe diarrhea) as well as growing knowledge around keeping potable water free from contaminants. Again, we come back to the major lifesaving actions of basic public health (and mostly sanitation-related) interventions.

According to the National Vaccine Information Centre in the US, by age three, most kids have had a case of rotavirus and by getting it the child will develop immunity for life. Many people don't know that the vaccines that work against rotavirus also come with a somewhat checked past; one was withdrawn back in 1999 after the CDC found the vaccine was linked to an increase in cases of intussusception (a type of bowel obstruction that can be fatal). In 2007, the US FDA issued a public health alert on a different rotavirus vaccine (intussusception again) and in 2010 the FDA issued another warning about a rotavirus vaccine that had become infected with a lethal strain of pig virus. Remember; this vaccine is for a 'disease' that is largely treatable, has very few deaths associated with it and involves huge costs in trying to immunize entire generations of children.

While brilliant Canadian research might be trying to develop better types of vaccines against the rotavirus, it seems to me you'd get a lot more public health impact if you made sure people washed their hands and tried to keep their drinking water clean and allowed natural immunity to develop. This vaccine seems a bit of a stretch in trying to be the poster-child for more investments in vaccine research.

Which brings me to the second example of stunning medical innovation, mentioned by BIOTECCanada, which

concerns the very controversial HPV vaccine. There are currently two vaccines on the market to immunize against the virus linked to cervical cancer. We have relatively low rates of cervical cancer deaths in Canada and an already effective screening program (the Pap smear) to prevent that disease, but what about in developing countries?

For several years now, a large HPV vaccine trial has been the subject of headlines in India, cited by one activist as a "clear case of child abuse" and a "violation of funda-

Public health officials seem eternally eager to urge all parents to get onboard with the full suite of recommended childhood vaccines for all our children.

mental human rights." She was referring to a trial in 2010 where more than 23,000 girls aged 10 to 14 were given the HPV vaccine in a manner that activists asserted was "tantamount to using Indians as guinea pigs." The main issues were the misleading information given to parents about the vaccine and the lack of proper monitoring of adverse effects and vaccine effectiveness.

You might put all that aside and ask, "But isn't it important to study the vaccine in India and help prevent so many women dying every year of cervical cancer?" One of the big problems is, of course, the cost and whether or not there are even proper ways to measure the effectiveness of

a vaccine program. Allyson Pollock, a researcher from the UK, told the *British Medical Journal* that an HPV vaccine program in India "seems totally irrational," citing statistics showing that cervical cancer in India has already dropped dramatically, going from 42.3 per 100,000 women in 1983 to 22.3 per 100,000 women in 2005. That's still a huge death rate, but something good must have been happening which predated the HPV vaccine, to have created such a huge reduction in cervical cancer deaths.

Currently, low-cost surveillance methods (such as the Pap smear) are effective and probably need to be more widely available in India. And given the many unknowns around the effectiveness and duration of protection offered by the HPV vaccine, it doesn't seem to make much sense to be pushing poor women into HPV vaccine programs.

But back to the glowing promotional material put out by groups like BIOTECCanada extolling the virtues of vaccine research. Do we need better vaccines? Maybe we do, but if the rotavirus and HPV vaccines are the best they can come up with, I would hope the investors are asking some hard questions about whether those companies are being somewhat disingenuous in wrapping up their research with so much hype.

Those who want to invest in improving the lives of people in this world might want to rethink the value of their investments. They might want to invest in toilets. <

Alan Cassels is a pharmaceutical policy researcher at the University of Victoria and the author of several books, including **ABCs of Disease Mongering: An Epidemic in 26 Letters**. www.alancassels.com

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Biotech plays the world hunger card to promote GMOs

While we all agree that world hunger is a problem we must act upon, agreeing on the solution is far more difficult. The world's largest seed and biotech companies want us to believe that genetic engineering – also called genetic modification or GM – is necessary to meet the challenge of world hunger. Many agribusiness sectors argue that their business models and new technologies are key to “feeding the world,” as well as to solving our global climate and energy crises.

At the Biomarine Business Conference last month in Halifax, the “Aquaculture Business Perspectives” pan-

question whether this future can ever become a reality, but first we need to ask if we need GM at all.

GM crops are not “serving” the poor now. Currently, 85% of planted GM crops are engineered to be tolerant to herbicides and the rest are insect resistant. The four major GM crops – corn, canola, soy and cotton – with the small exception of some sweetcorn, are developed for large-scale industrial farming and are cash crops for processed food ingredients, animal feed and even biofuel. They are not designed to suit the needs of small-scale farmers and none actually go towards feeding hungry people. Additionally, with the exception of GM cotton in India, the poor

to feed everyone, enough for 10 billion people (Eric Holt-Giménez, 2012). How is it possible that the world produces 17% more food per person than it did 30 years ago and yet the number of hungry people has increased? The claim that GM seeds and animals are needed to feed the world neglects the root problem: that hunger is caused by poverty.


People are hungry for many reasons: They do not have money to buy food. They do not have access to land to grow their own food. The problems are complex, including poor food distribution systems, food wastage and a lack of reliable water and infrastructure for irrigation, storage, transport and financing. If social,

Increased agricultural production will not help reduce food insecurity anywhere in the world. Hunger is a social justice problem, not a supply problem.

economic and political problems are not addressed and as long as food is not reaching those who are hungry and poor, increased agricultural production will not help reduce food insecurity anywhere in the world. Hunger is a social justice problem, not a supply problem.

In answer to the question, “Who will feed us?” ETC Group has most recently calculated that the industrial food chain uses about 70% of the world's agricultural resources to produce just 30% of our global food supply. In contrast, the ‘peasant’ food web provides 70% of all the food eaten by people, using only 30% of the resources, via urban agriculture, hunting and gathering, fishing and farming.

This diversity of production is not part of the corporate vision for our future. The same six companies that control all the GM seeds in the world – Monsanto, DuPont, Syngenta, Bayer, Dow and BASF – also control 75% of all private sector plant breeding research, 60% of the commercial seed market and 76% of global agrochemical sales (ETC Group 2013). The cost of feeding ourselves with this technology is, at the very least, surrendering our future control over seeds. The alternative is local control over seeds that are adapted to our environments and which make the most efficient use of local resources.

The reality is the world's three billion or so indigenous and peasant producers – rural and urban, fishers and pastoralists – not only feed a majority of the world's people now, but also create and conserve most of the world's biodiversity. It is clearly peasants who will feed us, not corporations. 

Lucy Sharratt is the coordinator at Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN). **Taarini Chopra** is a researcher at CBAN. For references, see www.cban.ca/Resources/Topics/Feeding-the-World and www.cban.ca/cotton



el's information included the statement: “With world population expected to increase by more than two billion by 2050, more food will be consumed in the next 50 years than in the whole of human history. According to aquaculture business leaders, including Henry Clifford, Vice President of Marketing and Sales at AquaBounty, the company that wants approval to sell its GM salmon for fish farming, “Feeding the world will become our most important and pressing global priority.”

Corporations are using the moral imperative to “feed the world” to justify their controversial products and ease government regulation. It's a compelling argument. In Halifax, Clifford used it to promote what he called “historically groundbreaking advances,” such as AquaBounty's fast-growing GM fish. He told conference participants, “We cannot allow the technophobes and Luddites to impede this work. We will need every biotech available.”

Is Clifford right? Do we need every technology, including every biotechnology, to solve the problem of world hunger? GM has failed so far to solve any measure of hunger and yet industry continues to promise new GM products for the future. We may

are not growing GE crops. The US, Brazil and Argentina grow 76% of the world's GM crops, with huge pesticide-dependent soybean farms, for animal feed, dominating South America's GE production.

When small farmers in the global south plant GM crops, they pay a high price if something goes wrong. In India, for example, GM cotton requires investments in seeds and chemicals, but yields have been unpredictable. GM cotton crop failures have been attributed to poor quality seeds, susceptibility to pests and the fact that the technology, developed in the US, is poorly adapted to local environmental conditions. In the state of Andhra Pradesh, where land-holdings are small, soils are marginal and unpredictable monsoons are the only source of water. The government estimates that 3.3 of the 4.7 million acres of GM cotton in 2011 had a yield loss of more than 50%. Farmers who take out loans to buy seed are unable to repay them and are pushed deeper into a cycle of poverty. Over a quarter of a million farmers in India have committed suicide in the past 15 years. If this staggering figure doesn't mark the failure of GE crops to help the poor, what does?

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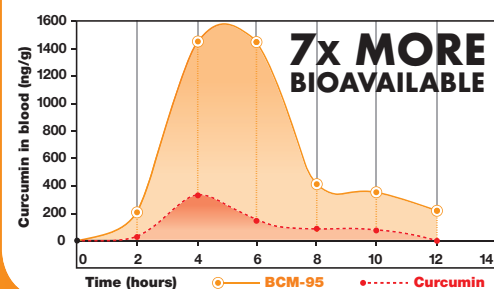
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Worldwide protest against chemical giant



The Vancouver March on October 12 will begin at 10am at the Vancouver Art Gallery, 750 Hornby Street.

community building closing ceremony.

Along with the march, there will be guest speakers, music, performers, artists... all ending with a special community building closing ceremony.

Currently, marches are being planned on six continents, in 36 countries, totalling events in over 250 cities. In the US, events are slated to occur simultaneously at 11AM


Pacific in 47 states.

Tami Monroe Canal, lead organizer and creator of the now-viral Facebook page, says she was inspired to start the movement to protect her two daughters. "I feel Monsanto threatens their generation's health, fertility and longevity. I couldn't sit by idly, waiting

for someone else to do something."

An organizer for the march in Athens, Greece, Roberta Gogos, spoke about the importance of the events in austerity-impacted South Europe. "Monsanto is working very hard to overturn EU regulation on obligatory labelling (questionable whether it's really enforced in any case), and no doubt they will have their way in the end. Greece is in a precarious position right now and Greece's farmers falling prey to the petrochemical giant is a very real possibility."

Josh Castro, organizer for Quito, says he wants to protect Ecuador against Monsanto's influence, too. "Ecuador is such a beautiful place, with the richest biodiversity in the world. We will not allow this Garden of Eden to be compromised by evil multinational corporations like Monsanto. Biotechnology is not the solution to world hunger. Agroecology is."

Partners facilitating the organizing of March Against Monsanto include The Anti-Media, Activists' Free Press A Revolt - Digital Anarchy and Children Of Vietnam Veterans Health Alliance. Major sponsors include GMO Free USA, NationofChange and Films for Action. 

From www.march-against-monsanto.com

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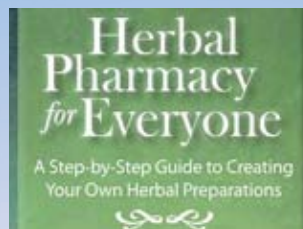
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Bonnie's bone bonanza

Bonnie was thinking about going vegan. Of all the dietary choices she had considered over the years, this made perfect sense and fit her values. Yet she wanted to be certain her new way of eating would provide every essential nutrient. The women in her family were blessed with slim figures, but cursed with frail bones and eventual fractures. Advertising and a pamphlet at her medical clinic – provided by the dairy industry – hammered home the message that milk products at every meal were her only choice. She didn't want to be an ethical person with brittle bones so she began an information search that *wasn't* linked to the dairy industry and came up with a summary she posted on her fridge.

Solid solutions for better bones

Eat dark green vegetables daily: Put broccoli, kale, collard greens, bok choy and Chinese (napa) cabbage on

your shopping lists. Grow kale late into the fall; request greens in your weekly organic produce delivery. Learn delicious ways to prepare greens. (See *Cooking Vegetarian* by Forest and Melina). Steam vegetables for minimal mineral losses; use the cooking water in soups. These greens give you bone-building vitamin K, too.

Use calcium-set tofu: Tofu is versatile; it can be used in everything from soup to dessert without menus being repetitious. Check labels for calcium content. The isoflavones in soyfoods (tofu, tempeh, soymilk) are linked with reduced risk of bone fracture.

Rely on calcium-fortified beverages: Fortified non-dairy milks and juices help bring total calcium intake to recommended levels.

Make almonds, almond butter, sesame tahini and blackstrap molasses a part of meals and snacks: By replacing two tablespoons of peanut

butter with an equal amount of almond butter, you increase calcium intake by 73 mg. With a tablespoon of blackstrap molasses instead of jam, you boost your intake by 168 mg of calcium. These options provide iron and zinc too.

Don't keep company with calcium thieves: Avoid high intakes of salt, alcohol and caffeine; avoid a sedentary lifestyle; of course, don't smoke.

Add sunshine (or vitamin D) to your day: Stretch your legs and walk around the block on your lunch break. Like cow's milk, non-dairy beverages are fortified with a




54-year-old co-author Brenda Davis has the bone health of a 25 year old.

little vitamin D. From cloudy October to April, add a vitamin D supplement.

Exercise: Walk, jog, dance, play ball, hike and step your way to life-long bone health. Whether you are young or old, these activities cause bones to retain minerals. With bones, it's a case of use 'em or lose 'em.

Top up your intakes with a supplement: If you doubt you are reaching recommended intakes (1,000 mg calcium daily from age 19; 1,200 mg for women over age 50 and for men over 70), include supplementary calcium.

Calcium is not the whole story: You'll get the whole team of bone building nutrients from a plant-based diet. Even lettuce can play a significant part.

Bonnie took these messages to heart. Her next X-ray showed that her bone density had improved; she felt fit and powerful. On a trip to Toronto last month, she saw strongman Patrik Baboumian set a world record by shouldering 550 kilos (1,212 pounds) and carrying that weight for over 10 meters (32.8 feet), then letting out a roar and the words "vegan power." 

Vesanto Melina is a Langley dietitian and author: www.nutrispeak.com, 604-882-6782. Her newest book, **Becoming Vegan Express**, is co-authored with dietitian Brenda Davis (pictured here) and packed with great reading for optimal health.



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Updates, outcomes & developments

signing copies of the July *Common Ground* featuring her article.”

Folk Music Ontario (FMO) is honouring Mike Stevens, the subject of last month's *Common Ground* cover story. He is being presented with the Estelle Klein Award for contributions to folk music. The award is named after a long-time advocate of Canadian folk music and one of the early founders of the folk festival scene in this country. Former recipients include Stan Rogers

and Sylvia Tyson.

Best known as a bluegrass musician, Mike has logged more than 300 appearances at the world famous Grand Ole Opry. A true pioneer of bluegrass harmonica, he is, of course, also known for his work connecting creative artists with indigenous youth in isolated communities and founder of the non-profit organization, ArtsCan Circle, the focus of last month's cover story. He will be presented with the award during a gala ceremony at FMO's annual folk music festival conference – the largest event of its kind in Canada – later this month, during which copies of *Com-*

mon Ground will be given to the 400 folk festival producers and performers from around the world.

As an innovative, groundbreaking performer, educator and author, Mike continues to expand the paradigms of harmonica, balancing tradition with cutting edge innovation, including looping techniques with voice and harmonica, which are spreading throughout the world. Mike's solo concerts and his *avant-garde* “Soundscape” performances with world renowned Magnum photojournalist Larry Towell also continue to push boundaries.

Hailey McHarg, who took the original photograph for our September issue says, “I have a great respect for Mike and consider our creative relationship a privilege. He considers his body to be his instrument; the harmonica is simply his amplifier. We've created studio shots of Mike playing without his shirt on in an attempt to capture the mechanics of his sound creation methods, which turns out... is harder than it sounds! And we collaborated on the cover for his album (Borealis Records) with virtuoso Okaidja Afros from Ghana, set to be released this month.”

Rev. Bernice King – youngest child of Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King and CEO of the Atlanta-based King Centre – was quoted on the 50th Anniversary of his iconic “Dream” speech in August.

She also talked about her slain father's legacy in a powerful keynote address to more than 10,000 people at the start of the first Reconciliation Walk in Canada, on September 22, in Vancouver.

His warning, “We must learn to live together or perish as fools” was followed by: “My father said human progress is neither automatic, nor inevitable” and her own challenge that “Canada be the great nation that it's called to be.

“Even a superficial look at history reveals that no social advance rolls in on the wheels of inevitability. Every step towards the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering and struggle. This requires leadership action on all fronts

in Canada, from political and government, corporate, faith, educational and community leadership, because, as I said, we are all in this together. We are tied in an inescapable network of mutuality, caught in a single garment of destiny and what affects one person here in Canada – no matter their background – directly, affects all indirectly.


I'm a little numb right now,” King reported, feeling helpless after hear-



We are tied in an
inescapable network
of mutuality, caught
in a single garment of
destiny and what affects
one person here in
Canada – no matter their
background – directly,
affects all indirectly –

Rev. Bernice King

ing about the atrocities suffered by young children who were forcibly removed from their homes and sent to government-funded, church-run schools, enduring physical and sexual abuse. “The manner in which people, human beings, have been treated, it's inexcusable.

“The reality is that although you have a historical context, you also have current policies and behaviour and attitudes that kind of reinforce the pain. This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action,” said King, paraphrasing the “Dream” speech from the historic March on Washington five decades ago that mobilized many and moved government to act. 

Studio shot of Mike Stevens playing without his shirt on in an attempt to capture the mechanics of his sound creation methods. Photo by Hailey McHarg.

Common Ground will have a presence at the Canadian Health Food Association (CHFA) Conference at Toronto's Convention Centre, October 3-6.

“This CHFA expo takes place the weekend before the March Against Monsanto event happening all over the world and the October edition will be available at those events in Canada,” reports Joseph Roberts, publisher of *Common Ground*. “As well, we are thrilled that Rachel Parent – the 14-year-old who debated CBC's Kevin O'Leary on GMOs – will be at our booth at CHFA, passing out her materials and



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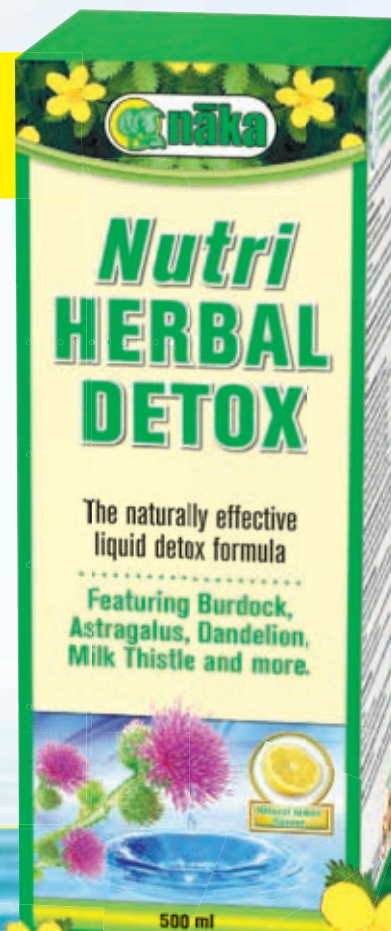
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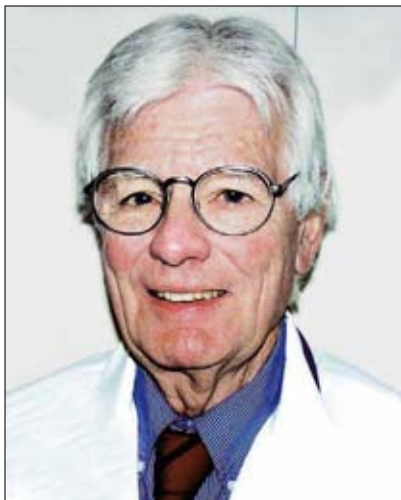


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Vitamin C and lysine heal hearts

A conversation with Dr. Gifford-Jones

by Joseph Roberts

7PM, Silver Harbour Center, 144 E. 22nd St., North Vancouver. Seating limited. RSVP to 604-363-6316 or naomik@pno.ca

Joseph Roberts: What is the most important thing Canadians need to do to be healthier and live longer?

Dr. Gifford-Jones: It gets back to that expression I often use from Pogo: "We've identified the enemy and the enemy is us." You know, if you keep going to hell, you'll eventually get there. We've gotten there in terms of the three epidemics that are going on in North America right now: obesity and type II diabetes, which really are uncontrolled and getting worse. It's going to bankrupt the healthcare system eventually because people don't understand that both of those epidemics are associated not just with obe-

sity and diabetes, but also with all the complications that go along with those two diseases. I don't know of anything other than really Draconian measures that would look after those epidemics.

But there is a third epidemic we can do something about and that's heart disease. Linus Pauling, William Stehbens and Sydney Bush proved you can reverse arteriosclerotic lesions with high doses of vitamin C and lysine. That should be a headline in every newspaper in the world. But it isn't accepted by the medical profession because, for years, they've been brainwashed, as has the public, by the hundreds of millions of dollars of pharmaceutical money that has told everyone that cholesterol-lowering drugs are the be-all and end-all of cardiovascular disease. That's a fallacy. The evidence for cholesterol-lowering drugs has

been challenged by a number of people, but it doesn't make the headlines. Here we have an epidemic that can be controlled, for relatively small amounts of money compared to the cost of cholesterol lowering drugs, but you never read about it in mainstream media.

Q: What about the other two epidemics?

A: The obesity epidemic has been going on for years. Basically, too many calories and not enough exercise. People have to stop eating the wrong foods. They have no idea of the number of calories they're consuming every day and it's the old story – if you don't burn them up, you gain weight. And it's not just obesity. It's overwhelming gross obesity. It can't go on. It's going to come to a crashing end one of these days when they realize there isn't enough money to look after all these

Dr. Gifford-Jones is a graduate of the University of Toronto and the Harvard Medical School. He has been a family doctor, hotel doctor and ship's surgeon. He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons and the author of seven books. His medical column is published by 70 Canadian newspapers and several in the US and Europe. See www.docgiff.com to read his medical columns.

October 16: Dr. Gifford-Jones gives a free lecture entitled **The Dynamic Duo for Fighting Heart Disease**,



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complications. People forget that type II diabetes is associated with gangrene of the extremities. In Manitoba, 25% of the bilateral leg amputations done are with aboriginal patients. A tremendous amount of suffering; some people go blind, others lose their kidney function.

Q: Let's talk more about heart disease for a bit. What do you see as



Linus Pauling said if you don't have enough vitamin C, you have inadequate collagen. You get cracks in the collagen and that's where a heart attack occurs.

wrong and how can we fix it?

A: Linus Pauling said if you don't have enough vitamin C, you have inadequate collagen. You get cracks in the collagen and that's where a heart attack occurs.

Stehbens, a pathologist at Oxford University, said Pauling is right, that the reason for these coronary cracks is inadequate collagen and strictly due to stress when the heart beats in the coronary arteries because there's a huge amount of pressure going on. The heart beats 100,000 times every 24 hours so those arteries are under a huge amount of stress. He said, after all, the stress in the coronary arteries is greater than the artery down in the big toe and something's got to give.

Of course, the person who put that all together was Sydney Bush in England. An optometrist who showed that by giving high doses of vitamin C and lysine you could reverse arteriosclerotic lesions by looking at the retinal arteries. He really should've been given the Nobel Prize not for the info about vitamin C and lysine, but for the fact that he put the photo of the retina before treatment and a year after treatment and you could see the regression of the lesions. I was skeptical of the findings so I flew to England to spend a week with him. I said, "Show me these

before and after photos" and he did and there was no doubt there's a regression of lesions. So if you can cause regression of atherosclerosis in retinal arteries, the head's connected to the body so you'll also have regression in the coronary arteries.

Pauling has really proven his theory. He used to say we're all dying of sub-clinical scurvy. It only takes 10 milligrams of vitamin C to fight scurvy, but it takes several thousand to reverse arteriosclerotic lesions. So what Bush has really shown is that not only are you reversing atherosclerosis in the retinal arteries, you're reversing it in the 60,000 miles of blood vessels throughout the body. So you're causing a regression of lesions in all these vessels throughout the body, which means you're going to have lower blood pressure, better blood flow to the kidneys and less renal dysfunction.

Better blood flow to all parts of the body also means getting rid of 25% of the amputations in Manitoba. What a cheap way to stop the tremendous social chaos and tragedy that bilateral leg amputations cause: to just give people vitamin C and lysine. **■**

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Saving ourselves

ated landscape speak for themselves. In this harsh environment, with people struggling to redeem or enrich themselves, a social conscience seems to be treated like a liability.

In *From Neurons to Nirvana* (October 1, 9), Oliver Hockenhull's thorough exploration of banned psychedelic drugs brings a much-needed dose of sanity to the discussion about the use of ayahuasca, MDMA, LSD, psilocybin and marijuana. While proven to have beneficial medical applications, these

drugs are treated on a par with hard drugs such as heroin and cocaine. The documentary makes extensive use of archive material and experiments with an array of visual graphics to make its points and shows how drugs act upon an individual. The fact that psychedelics are in the public domain made them a target, suggests Hockenhull, with Big Pharma's philosophy being, "If you can't patent it, then prohibit it." Perhaps most interesting is his argument that responsible use of psychedelics could possibly open doors in our consciousness that could mean the difference between our "salvation or destruction."

Documentary *Money for Nothing*:

Inside the Federal Reserve (October 5, 8) is a polished, accessible account of the shadowy world of central banking. It tracks the causes of the financial meltdown and conveys an overarching sense that US monetary policy makers continue to juggle with fiscal dynamite. While "Fed" interviewees are only too happy to share insights and *mea culpas*, this doesn't have the same moral urgency of earlier doc *Inside Job* when exposing transgressions.

As VIFF closes on October 11, *Watermark*, a new documentary from *Manufactured Landscapes* Jennifer Baichwal and renowned photographer Edward Burtynsky, opens in Vancouver. Pulling from 10 countries, the film navigates 20 stories on the theme of water. These range from the construction of the Xiluodu Dam – six times the size of the Hoover – to the Kumbh Mela festival where 30 million gather for a sacred bath in the Ganges at the same time, to the water-intensive leather tanneries of Dhaka.

Finally, an important new film recently opened in the US: *OMG GMO* reveals the pervasiveness of genetically modified food and searches for a way to break out of that reliance. See the feature article in this issue of *Common Ground*. www.gmofilm.com

Robert Alstead is making *Running on Climate*, www.runningonclimate.com

From *The Expedition to the End of the World*. A quixotic voyage aboard a schooner through the fjords of North-East Greenland.

How does humanity deal with the threat of annihilation of itself and the biosphere? Three documentaries at the Vancouver International Film Festival offer very different responses.

In *The Expedition to the End of the World* (*Ekspeditionen til verdens ende*), Danish director Daniel Dencik follows a crew of artists and scientists on a quixotic voyage aboard a schooner through the fjords of North-East Greenland which, thanks to a warming climate, is now navigable for a few weeks each summer. Framed artfully against an exquisitely still landscape, the team members

philosophize on the nature of being and douse existential angst with dry Northern European humour. It's beautiful visually and sometimes very funny.

Oil Sands Karaoke (October 4, 6, 11) is like a television talent competition except it follows workers in Fort McMurray, Alberta, bonding in a pub over a karaoke competition. The contestants share why they work in one of the most vilified industries in the world – a good pay cheque is a big part of it – and how karaoke relieves the loneliness and grind. The broader health and climate issues of the tarsands are muted, while director Charles Wilkinson (*Peace Out*) lets the visuals of the eviscer-

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... *Salmon People* from p.47

the fishery slip through their fingers. One of the fears voiced in newspaper articles and on radio talk shows was that Native fishers would ruin the fishery by overfishing. Little was said about the destruction to the fishery by foreign offshore trawlers with their factory ships or the army of sports fishers who waited in ambush at the mouth of the river each year for the salmon to return.

The idea was that Indians had no business competing with the commercial and sports fishery. This was never said out loud. It was just in the air. Certainly, this was the attitude of the Department of Fish and Game. And as Indians pushed to secure their treaty rights to the salmon, a strange dance began. Indians would push off in their boats and set their nets in the river, all of which, under the terms of the Medicine Creek Treaty, was legal. Game wardens would arrest, fine, and jail the fishers and confiscate their boats and nets. The Indians would go to court and the court would throw the government's case out. The Indians would claim their boats and nets and go back on the river. But the arrests and fines and court costs took their toll. Boats and nets were never returned in a timely manner, and, many times, they would somehow sustain damage during their impoundment. As soon as the Indians got back on the river, the game wardens would arrest them once more, and the great legal mandala would begin to turn again.

One of my historian friends, who wishes to remain anonymous, told me the story of his time on the rivers of the Northwest assisting some of the tribes with their fishing protests. He said that, after a while, the people would go out on the river with their worst boats and their worst nets. As soon as the wardens confiscated the



Offshore trawlers continue to take the lion's share of the salmon... with the new threat from fish-farm diseases and the lack of regulation or responsibility in that particular industry, a once-vibrant fishery may be on its way to extinction.

equipment and were busy dragging the derelict boats and nets back to town, the Natives would bring out their good boats and their good nets and continue fishing. The situation on the rivers became increasingly violent. Boats rammed each other. There were beatings. Folks began shooting at each other. On September 9, 1970, state law-enforcement officials raided a large fishing camp on the banks of Puyallup River. Sixty people were arrested and the fishing village was bulldozed. No one was killed, but that was the only good news.

And, as one might expect, the question of treaty rights went back to court, this time to the District Court for the Western District of Washington. *United States v. State of Washington*. If you're surprised that the U.S. government sued the State of Washington on behalf of Native people, don't be. One of the legal issues in the fishing wars was federal jurisdiction versus state jurisdiction. Treaty land, let's not forget, was federal land.

The arguments in *United States v. State of Washington* were the same as they had been for the last hundred years. On the one hand, it was argued, the treaty of Medicine Creek gave Indian people the right to fish. On the other hand, it was argued, the State of Washington had the right to regulate its fishery, regardless of any treaty. And when all the motions had been made and all the points had been argued, the district court, under Justice George Boldt, ruled not only that Indians had a guaranteed right to fish, but that they had the right to 50 percent of the harvestable fish.

The sound you just heard was the State of Washington passing out. In the end, no one won much. The salmon fishery had already been in decline. And that decline has continued. Offshore trawlers continue to take the lion's share of the salmon. The state, the sports fishery and the Natives have come to some tentative agreements to try to conserve the salmon, but with the new threat from fish-farm diseases and the lack of regulation or responsibility in that particular industry, a once-vibrant fishery may be on its way to extinction.

GE salmon not worth the risk



"The Call of the River." An original painting by Autumn Skye Morrison. www.autumnskyemorrison.com

The wild salmon that return to us every year, offering their nourishment, inspiration and beauty, are a miracle of creation. Autumn Skye Morrison's "The Call of the River" inspired *Salmon Wisdom* on the back of 7"x9" versions and was shared with friends, family and colleagues..

It reads, in part, "Salmon are an important part of the wheel of life, a powerful reminder of our interconnectedness and a teacher of self-sacrifice. To indigenous cultures of the Northwest, salmon are highly respected and appreciated, symbolizing instinct, determination, prosperity and renewal. The Celts believe salmon to be one of the wisest and most ancient of all animals, representing wisdom, transformation and inspiration."

In September, the US company AquaBounty, started


by two Canadian men with the goal of developing and marketing genetically engineered salmon, applied to Health Canada for human consumption testing and approval of their very questionable product. According to the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network, "AquaBounty does not yet have permission from Environment Canada to commercially produce its GE salmon eggs at its PEI facility. Environment Canada refuses to disclose if the department is already assessing a request from AquaBounty." Their plan is to ship these 'Franken-salmon' eggs to a facility high in the mountains of Panama to be grown to market size in tanks, harvested, packaged and shipped back to us to eat. Does this sound crazy? It gets worse.

In 2009, the DFO reported to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency that Infectious Salmon Anemia (ISA) virus had been found in the GE salmon in the supposedly secure AquaBounty research facility on PEI. What if these infected salmon were to escape their tanks in PEI or Panama through flooding or some other disaster? AquaBounty says that 95% of the salmon would be sterile females and the rest males. But they can't guarantee ISA infected male salmon wouldn't escape into the biosphere. It's yet another pending environmental disaster and the entire process of assessing the environmental risk is being done in secret without public consultation. Canada has not even ratified the UN protocols on bio-safety for international transport of living modified organisms.

There are also the health implications of eating GE salmon to consider.

Dr. Mercola already lists conventional

farmed salmon as the worst in his top 10 foods to avoid. Add in transgenic engineering of Atlantic salmon with genes from an "eel-like creature" the "Ocean Pout" and a Chinook, and then feed it a diet of God only knows what GMO-derived feed, antibiotics and drugs and this plan is a health train-wreck right out of the gates.

We should not accept these massive risks to our environment and personal health. Write to the Minister of the Environment and Health Canada and express your concerns. For an easy to use form letter that will be sent to the right people, visit cban.ca and click on "No GM Fish" and follow the links. Raise awareness in your community about GE salmon. It could be approved or rejected any day now in the US where there have been delays and considerable push-back from the public and lawmakers. 

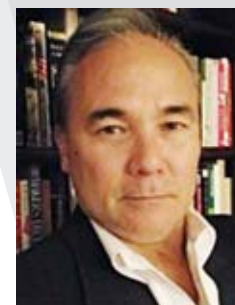
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Senator Maralyn Chase says “Yes” to GMO labeling

The focus of most people in favor of labeling genetically engineered food is the need to know what they are putting in their bodies and feeding their children.

I get that. In this day and age, we count every calorie and every gram of fat. People want to know what they are eating.

That is the biggest part of the motivation behind Initiative 522, which will appear on the November ballot in Washington State. If approved, it will require that our state establish a system for labeling genetically engineered food.

I, too, am concerned about the long-term health impacts of consuming genetically engineered food, but my primary concern today about genetically modified organisms, or GMOs, is one even more universal than calorie counting. My primary concern is about the economy.

Many of our trading partners, specifically those in the European Union and Pacific Rim, have banned the importation of unlabeled genetically modified foods. All told, more than 60 countries now refuse to import such products without proper labeling.

I would prefer that we had a federal labeling system in place, but I don't have to tell you that waiting for the Feds to act on anything takes more time than we have. Instead, we have to protect the health of our communities by developing our own system now.

Connecticut became the first state to pass a law requiring such labeling, but the law will not be enacted until neighboring states follow suit. Fortunately, similar bills are indeed advancing through other legislatures throughout New England.

Washington is still the only state where labeling is currently on the ballot this fall – so we will be letting our voters decide if they want genetically engineered foods to be labeled. Success in Washington will not only help build national momentum and engage more Americans in the effort, but it will also help lay the groundwork for future campaigns across the nation.

– Senator Maralyn Chase, Washington State Senate Democratic Caucus, www.senatedemocrats.wa.gov/senators/chase/

... *GMO OMG* from p.9

ourselves to be a part of this experiment? And even if you're willing to take the risk, do you have the right to subject your fellow citizens or children to it?

Once you know about GMOs, it is not an issue you can stay on the fence about because you eat every single day. There's no way out because what you eat shapes the world around us. What you eat makes you a participant in a larger system, one that interacts with the planet, whether you like it or not.

In his book, *The Unsettling of America*, Wendell Berry writes, “In order to understand our own time and predica-



ment and the work that is to be done, we would do well to shift the terms and say that we are divided between exploitation and nurture.”

That is the real divide in our food system: in energy, in consumerism and in our relationships with one another. If you choose to ignore GMOs and the giant corporations taking over our food because it's overwhelming or you like the convenience and affordability of their products, then you've chosen to participate in the system of exploitation.

Those of us who do not live on and from the land must stand in solidarity with farmers here and around the world who choose the way of nurture – understanding the interconnectedness of all life and embracing a way of living that regenerates soil, seed and life so we have something to pass on to our children.

If you choose to be a “nurturer” rather than an “exploiter,” there are simple, powerful, practical ways to live out that philosophy. First, vote with your fork; second, demand labelling for GMOs and stand up for your right to know; and, third, participate in our democracy and help promote fair food and farm policies, creating the systemic changes necessary for true sustainability.


On a personal level, which collectively can grow into national significance and create real change, you can vote with your fork. Don't buy GMOs or any products that come

from the biotech or agrochemical industry. Buy organic, local, seasonal food. Shop at farmers' markets and join a Community Supported Agriculture program (CSA). It will be tough making the transition and it will cost more, but this is something you can start doing today.

To make this first step achievable, we have to fight for the labelling of GMOs and that fight is happening in states across the US right now. The biggest push happened in the fall of 2012 with California's Proposition 37. Over six million people voted for their right to know, but the pesticide and junk food industry (companies like Pepsi, Coca-Cola, Dupont and Monsanto) spent over a million dollars a day on deceptive ads in the last month to narrowly defeat the proposition. However, no one in the movement saw it as a defeat. They had exposed the industry's fear of labelling and willingness to spend millions to keep us in the dark and they raised consciousness across the nation, paving the way for labelling efforts around the country. Connecticut and Maine have already enacted mandatory GMO labelling, as long as other major New England states do so and Washington state's I-522 ballot initiative is the battle that will blow this issue wide open this year.

On November 5, the people of Washington will vote for their right to know, but they will be voting for all of us and thus all of us should sign up, donate and volunteer. A victory in Washington, close on the heels of victories in Connecticut and Maine, will force “Big Food” to accept the inevitable labelling at the national level and to cut a deal with regulators (the FDA in this case), as happened in Europe a decade ago.

Beyond voting with our forks and the immediate fight for GMO labelling, I agree with Wenonah Hauter, author of *Foodopoly* and executive director of Food & Water Watch, that the next step is politicizing the growing numbers of people joining the movement for real food, who are voting with their dollars, and organizing direct relationships between farmers and eaters. She writes, “Creating a just society where everyone can enjoy healthy food produced by thriving family farmers using organic practices can only be realized by making fundamental structural changes to society and to farm and food policies.”

I feel hope every time I see my son, Finn, with his seed collection, showing his awe and wonder at the world around him. I feel hope when I realize that we don't have to keep doing what we're doing, exploiting the earth for profit and applying the industrialized, capitalistic model to how we grow our food. I feel hope when I see the power of the Earth to regenerate itself and heal the damage we have done, if only we will stop our plundering and let it heal. And seeds give me hope as well – every one a tiny miracle and promise of life. 



Jeremy Seifert is a filmmaker, activist and father of three. His debut film **DIVE!** has won at 22 festivals worldwide, establishing him as a storyteller with heart and humour. Jeremy's second film, **GMO OMG**, tells the hidden story of the takeover of our food supply by giant chemical companies. Jeremy

lives in North Carolina with his wife Jen and their three children. Originally published in Fair World Project For A Better World www.fairworldproject.org.

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Burning trash is a waste of energy

Many urban areas have built or are considering building waste-incineration facilities to generate energy. At first glance, it seems like a win-win. You get rid of “garbage” and acquire a new energy source with fuel that’s almost free. But it’s a problematic solution and a complicated issue.

Metro Vancouver has a facility in Burnaby and is planning to build another...

The term “waste” is correct; there’s really no such thing as garbage. And that’s one problem with burning it for fuel. Even those who promote the technology would probably agree that the best ways to deal with waste are to reduce, reuse and recycle it. It’s astounding how much unnecessary trash we create through excessive packaging, planned obsolescence, hyperconsumerism and lack of awareness. This is one area where individuals can make a difference – by refusing to buy overpackaged goods, encouraging companies to reduce packaging and by curbing our desire to always have newer and shinier stuff.

We toss out lots of items that can be reused, repaired or altered for other purposes. As for recycling, we’ve made great strides, but we still send close to three quarters of our household waste to the landfill. Considering each Canadian produces close to 1,000 kilograms of

waste a year, that’s a lot of trash! Much of the material that ends up in landfills is usable, compostable or recyclable, including tonnes of plastics.

Turning unsorted and usable trash into a valuable fuel commodity means communities are less likely to choose to reduce, reuse and recycle it. Burning waste can seem easier and less expensive than sorting, diverting and

Each Canadian produces close to 1,000 kg of waste a year; that’s a lot of trash!

recycling it. But once it’s burned, it can never be used for anything else – it’s gone!

Incinerating waste also comes with environmental problems. Although modern technologies reduce many air pollutants once associated with the process, burning plastics and other materials still creates emissions that can contain toxins such as mercury, dioxins and furans. As with burning fossil fuels, burning waste – much of which is plastics derived from fossil fuels – also produces carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide emissions that contribute to climate change.

Burning waste doesn’t make it disappear, either... a great deal of toxic “bottom ash” is left over. Metro

Vancouver says bottom ash from its Burnaby incinerator is about 17% the weight of the waste burned. That ash must be disposed of, usually in landfills. Metro testing has found high levels of the carcinogenic heavy metal cadmium in bottom ash, sometimes twice the limit allowed for landfills. High lead levels have also been reported.

Incineration is also expensive and inefficient. Once we start the practice, we come to rely on waste as a fuel commodity and it’s tough to go back to more environmentally sound methods of dealing with it... It’s a complicated issue. We need to find ways to manage waste and generate energy without relying on diminishing and increasingly expensive supplies of polluting fossil fuels. Sending trash to landfills is clearly not the best solution. But we have better options than landfills and incineration, starting with reducing the amount of waste we produce. Through education and regulation, we can reduce obvious sources and divert more compostable, recyclable and reusable materials away from the dump. It’s simply wasteful to incinerate it. ◀

Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation Communications Manager Ian Hanington. Learn more at www.davidsuzuki.org

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GET INVOLVED!

Contact your Senate and House representatives and ask them to support the Genetically Engineered Food Right to Know Act introduced in April of this year.

Washington residents can go even further and vote YES on I-522, the GMO labeling initiative that will be on the ballot this fall.



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Victory in Washington state will lead to national labeling:

Washington has major agricultural sectors and fisheries that are very concerned about GMO wheat, salmon and apples. Washington is where we can punch through to victory; other states will follow and national labeling is inevitable. Wherever you live in the US, please sign up at www.Yeson522.com to donate and volunteer to answer the opposition lies on TV while a huge grassroots surge reaches voters directly. If enough voters are reminded of their own rights and power, I522 can win.

Genetic Engineering = More Pesticides.

Chemical companies genetically engineer DNA from bacteria into food crops to either produce or tolerate the pesticides they sell. This foreign DNA produces foreign proteins in every cell of the plant that we eat in our food. No long-term independent safety studies have been performed on adverse health effects. Overuse of pesticide is creating resistant superweeds and superbugs and more and more pesticide is sprayed. Now chemical companies like Monsanto and Dow are engineering resistance in food crops to much more toxic weed killers like Dicamba and 2,4 D, the main ingredient in Agent Orange.

Over 64 countries around the world mandate labeling GMOs, including all in Europe, Japan and even China. Last year a huge coalition of consumer groups, health advocates and environmentalists supported California Proposition 37 to label GMOs. Due to a relentless attack of deceptive TV ads funded by pesticide and junk food manufacturers, just enough California voters were swayed to vote against their own interests in 2012. However that battle has sparked a nationwide movement and set us up for victory in Washington State where voters will vote on I522, The Washington Right to Know Genetically Engineered Foods Act.

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The future of farming

Recently, while driving in my Smart car, I heard the following on CBC radio: “In 10 years time, 75% of Canada’s farmers will have retired.” My thoughts immediately turned to where the food will come from in the future. Today, about 70-80% of organic products in Canada are imported, primarily from the US. The bulk of Canada’s organic exports are grain, sold mainly to the European Union.

The figures for employment in agriculture are disturbing; the number of workers employed on Vancouver Island farms fell by 40% over the past seven years. In BC, province-wide, the drop was 50%. The downward trend began in 2006, after the provincial government introduced sweeping new farm regulations imposing tougher restraints on farmers who raise and butcher animals. Many small-scale producers, the mainstay of the rural economy, were hardest hit and went under after standards with prohibitive capital costs were imposed on commercial-grade abattoirs.

The last 10 years have seen a phenomenal explosion in the organic food movement, as it has moved from niche market to mainstream. Today, it is the fastest growing segment of the food industry, attracting all the major food corporations. Recently, a film on CBC’s Doc Zone, *The New Green Giants*, looked at a number of organic corporations and showed how many had failed to live up to the idealistic dreams first espoused by the back-to-the land folk of the late sixties and early seventies. When an international team went to China to investigate compliance with USDA organic standards, they found some farmers had not even read the standards because they had not been translated into Chinese! As an advocate, activist and practitioner of organic growing for the past 30 years, I feel completely betrayed. (<http://www.cbc.ca/doc-zone/episode/the-new-green-giants.html>)

We could either see this as a crisis or an opportunity. I see the future of farming as a golden egg, offering phenomenal growth and employment in the gutted agricultural sector. Concerned citizens are flocking back to farmer’s markets – and their own backyards – to safeguard the quality of food by establishing a connection to its source. The law of economics shows supply and demand go hand in hand; as demand increases so does the incentive to restructure local food systems.

I have coined a new term for this: the new “gastro-economy.” I envisage local food systems where not only producers are rewarded financially, but also the entire community, which reaps benefits from the gastronomic spin offs. Buying local keeps money in the local economy, which makes everyone better off.

As an operator of a certified organic plant and seed nursery, my experience has proven there is a good living – and a good life – to be had from making sure your neighbour is fed. It’s time to tell my story in another book, *The Zero-Mile Business: Making a Living From the Land*, in which I intend to inspire a new generation of farmers and market gardeners.

Until government introduces policies, incentives and training to ensure a succession plan for agriculture, we must join and support the expanding grassroots food movement to grow safe, nutritious food without a carbon footprint. Otherwise, we will have to accept organic food with a “Made in China” sticker and from a personal, sovereign and food security point of view, that’s just not acceptable. ◀

Carolyn Herriot is author of **The Zero-Mile Diet** and **The Zero-Mile Diet Cookbook** (Harbour Publishing). She grows “Seeds of Victoria” at The Garden Path Centre. www.seedsofvictoria.com

Yes, you can sing!



Lynn McGown

It all began on a small swing set on the banks of Lac St Louis just outside of Montreal, with my four-year-old legs reaching for the sky, small arms pumping, big, full body breaths and voice rippling across the lake, “You are my sunshine/You make me happy when skies...” It was a natural experience that would become the foundation for my unique and unconventional approach to vocal coaching. Singing was a parent and a self-soothing friend growing up in a family where alcohol addiction set the tone.

In my early teenage years, I auditioned and sang lead parts in the musicals, *The Sound of Music*, *Carousel*, *Oklahoma* and the play *Anne Frank*. During this time, I also received my first voice lessons. Later,

I sang my way across Europe, the UK, Canada, Central America and the US, in youth hostels, coffee houses and festivals. Song was a way to give form to my myriad emotions.

As well as travelling and attending university, I took acting classes in the Stanislavski system. I found I had already been using many of his techniques to access emotions in my singing. I experimented with gestalt, shiatsu, macrobiotics, Feldenkrais, the Alexander Technique and free-form dance. I also began my life-long practice of yoga and meditation. These were exciting years where I had the time to experience all of these modalities that I now, in a very natural and organic way, integrate into my vocal coaching practice.

My professional singing life brought me gifts of courage, depth and presence. I sang on open stages, concerts, radio shows and festivals. I met my life partner through our love for singing. We have raised our own two children and two foster

Where it Began Lynn McGown

sons while always working and making space for our music. Twenty years ago, we started the Jericho Folk Club working with hugely talented local musicians as well as international performers.

My vocation as a singing coach found me. My practice came quickly and I began to work with singers privately, in workshops and in residential settings. Like each individual, the voice is multi-faceted, complex and yet very simple. As terrified beginners, professionals and many in-betweens piled into my studio, I realized that, to unlock their throats, hearts and dreams, many students needed vocal techniques

Singing is about...expressing the joy, love, sadness, rage, fears and ecstasy of being alive.

intertwined with a language that complemented their learning styles and also spoke to their conscious and unconscious minds. I use my training as a life coach and as an NLP practitioner to facilitate these possibilities.

Each lesson is tailored for the individual singer. As a vocal coach, I bring all of my skill, experience and intuition to allow the singer’s beautiful, powerful, authentic voice to emerge. Singing is about telling stories that touch you. It is about expressing the joy, love, sadness, rage, fears and ecstasy of being alive. All of which I began on the small swing as a four-year-old who was happy because she sang and not the other way around. ◀

Lynn McGown is a Vancouver-based singing teacher and a vocal coach. She offers individually tailored lessons for beginners and professionals, workshops and sound healing and life coaching. www.lynnmcgown.com, 604-222-4113.

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Mac McLaughlin

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October 2013

LET'S INVOKE the spirit of Libra. The seventh sign of the zodiac, Libra is a cardinal air sign, ruled by Venus. The cardinal signs carry great power and energy, as Aries initiates the spring season, Cancer the summer, Libra the fall and Capricorn the winter. The element of air, combined with this dynamic cardinal sign, produces some of the most talented, beautiful, creative and profound people on the planet. Venus/Libra would be depicted strongly in the lives of such luminaries as Mahatma Gandhi, John Lennon, Pierre Trudeau and former US President Jimmy Carter. Libra bestows great beauty, grace, charm and a powerful intellect. The new Moon on October 4 releases this dynamic Libra energy and we have an opportunity to use it, abuse it or lose it.

Libra is depicted by a blindfolded woman, holding a sword in one hand and scales in the other. The symbol represents impartial justice, fairness, harmony and balance. If the scales are not balanced, we have injustice, imbalance, war and chaos to deal with. Uranus is involved with this Libra new Moon and it is an indicator that we may be in for a few shocks and surprises as the month unfolds. At the time of this writing, (September 7), the world is deciding what to do with the grievous and very dangerous circumstances in Syria. We may very well be on the verge of war in the middle east. The world leaders would be wise to use the Venus/Libra energy to negotiate peace, as the alternative will be the use of that sword the Goddess wields in order to help protect the suffering souls that are enduring great pain, hardship and loss. We are the world, we are the people and now the stars are asking for our assistance in bringing world peace closer, rather than further from our grasp.

Another major feature regarding Libra is relationships – be they marital, personal or professional. With Uranus involved with the new Moon energy, we may find it is time to sort things out and shake things up. The inhabitants of the local islands call it “the island shuffle.” Then again, we can get it right and settle down with peace in our hearts. It's all about love, kindness, consideration and caring for one another, close and far. The full Moon lunar eclipse on October 18 will help us come to terms with whatever is on board at that time. Retrograde Mercury, combined with Saturn throughout the month, does indeed speak of serious negotiations and circumstances developing throughout the land.

Mac McLaughlin has been a practising, professional astrologer for more than four decades. His popular **Straight Stars** column ran in Vancouver's largest weekly newspaper for 11 years. Email mac@macsstars.com or call 604-731-1109.

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ARIES Mar 21 - Apr 19

You have an opportunity to break through the limitations and restrictions that have held you back for way too long. You are on a journey of self-discovery. Staying true to yourself is the main ingredient that will bring you the freedom you long for. The full Moon on October 18 will bring powerful revelations.



TAURUS Apr 20 - May 21

It is time to organize and arrange your life in the way you want it to be. The main theme throughout the month will be communications and negotiations. Wills and secret matters are dealt with. Keep your lines of communication open and be willing to make changes where necessary. An understanding arrives October 20.



GEMINI May 22 - Jun 20

Generally, things cool down as the fall season gets rolling. But that's not the case for Gemini. Actually, things heat up in the romance and finance departments. You may be intensely fixated on working through the knots and concerns of the times. Relationships, travel and health are the main topics to consider this month.



CANCER Jun 21 - Jul 22

The new Moon on October 4 brings a time in which home, family and career topics dominate the conversations. Your home and work environments may be changing – such as, you may work from home or have to leave home to work. It's all good. Luck and timing are important factors now. Do your best.



LEO Jul 23 - Aug 22

You may be in the mood to fight and set things right. Matters pertaining to home, family, vehicles and property come up now. Walk softly, but carry a big stick. Keep in mind that a soft reply avoids wrath and resistance. It's a lively time and a great time to socialize and enjoy the days.



VIRGO Aug 23 - Sep 22

Mars journeys through Virgo, while Mercury moves through Mars-ruled Scorpio. It's called mutual reception when two planets are in each other's signs. It means that a very busy and demanding time is upon you and you have to keep it all together in somewhat stormy weather. Doing one thing at a time is best.



LIBRA Sep 23 - Oct 22

Throw your hat into the ring or come up with a ring and you may break with a ring or a circle of people from the past. It is time to make important changes relationship and career-wise. The lunar eclipse on October 18 brings it all into the light. Excitement and challenge rule the days.



SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21

Mercury and Saturn are in close proximity throughout most of October as they continue their journey through Scorpio. On the positive side of the coin, this is a great aspect for research, discovery and study of any kind. The downside is worry and controversy, as delays and other types of hurdles and obstructions manifest.



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21

Mars traverses your solar ninth house indicating travel and activities related to publishing and education. Mid-October, Mars enters your solar career sector guaranteeing a busy and demanding fall season. There may be hidden negotiations in the works and possibly you will change jobs or career path. Inheritances and joint monies come into play.



CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 19

Your solar career sector is strongly activated, as is your house of relationships. Expect a few surprises or opportunities to manifest in which you are able to move up and ahead. You will possibly be honoured for some achievement. Watch for waste and guard against overindulgence of any particular kind. An important relationship may develop.



AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 19

Travel, work, relationships and health considerations are on the cosmic menu for your choice of the pickings. Publishing, education and writing are also featured. Nothing may come easy, though, as Mercury and Saturn move through your solar tenth house bringing concerns and hard work. Roll up your sleeves and get to work. What else to do?

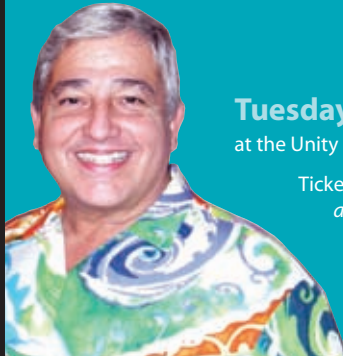


PISCES Feb 20 - Mar 20

The meaning and value of life intensify as Neptune's transit through Pisces is destined to refine you and attune you to the cosmic forces. The highest form of manifestation for this planetary combination is within the concepts of universal compassion, service and love. Expect to lose the way and find it again, and again.


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Just now an interview with Eckhart Tolle

To read Eckhart Tolle's latest column, please see the current print edition of *Common Ground*. For copyright reasons, we are authorized to publish this column in our print version only.

JR: In your new book, I feel like you're the modern equivalent of the explorers that came to the new world, but an explorer and documenter of consciousness, discovering a new world.

ET: Yes, discovering is the right word. It's not that you need to make a great effort to attain it or bring it about or acquire it. It's discovering it's already there in you – conscious awareness that's obscured, or partially obscured, in many people. It's a discovery of something already there.

It's like waking up after a dream, because identification with the thinking mind and its stories and the old emotional conditioning is like being immersed in a kind of dream world, which very often turns into a nightmare – acting out old conditioned patterns again and again. The whole structure of the egoic mind is an old dysfunction.

There's some evidence that the ego started about 6,000 years ago, but nobody can say for sure. Before that, humans were in a state of innocence. When we go beyond the dysfunction of the ego, we regain our original innocence, but on a much deeper level. This is why Jesus said unless we become as little children we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

So, returning to the original innocence, and at the same time going much deeper into that with full awareness – that's the process. We're coming out of thousands of years of dreadful suffering, almost the whole of recorded history of humanity. If you really look at it in an unbiased way, as if you'd never seen it before, one cannot but admit that, to a large extent, 80 to 90 percent of it is a history of pathological insanity, the suffering that humans have created for themselves and, of course, inflicting it upon others.

JR: And exporting it through colonization to the new world.

ET: Yes, so the important part of the awakening process is the realization of the insanity in human history, collectively, to this day playing itself out in world events. Also, to be aware of the insanity within oneself – old, dysfunctional patterns that come again and again that create suffering. So when you see that you're insane, then you're not completely insane. Sanity comes the moment you realize the fact of insanity. To see insanity is not a negative thing.

JR: At least you're out of denial.

ET: Yes, that's why in the film *A Beautiful Mind*, for example, which is about a mathematical genius who did have a mental dysfunction, his mind was developed in certain areas but he was also insane. The viewer of the film doesn't know that until a certain point when the character realizes that many of his experiences are delusions. At that moment, his healing begins. He's not cured yet, but his healing begins because he's recognized his own insanity. That recognition can only come out of sanity, which is the awareness of unconditioned consciousness.

There's a dimension in us that has nothing to do with content. Self-realization is that I am not that. I'm not my story, not my grievances and hang-ups, not the story of me that I'm telling other people at parties or repeating in my head again and again. That is only form. It's temporary.

When you see what you're not, it's already liberating. Something inside you breathes a sigh of relief. Then, of course, the mind begins to ask, "What are you if you are not that?" It wants an answer. In other words, it wants some new form. It wants a new thought. There must be a thought that I am. But it doesn't work like that. That's why the great book the Tao Te Ching starts with the line that the Tao that can be spoken of is not the true Tao because Tao – in the ancient Chinese way of putting it – is the formless dimension. You could say pure consciousness, but with any term we use we have to be careful it's not mistaken for "It." Otherwise, the mind comes in and says, "Oh, consciousness, yes. I believe that I'm consciousness." It's not another belief. It's finding that spaciousness inside yourself that's there when you let go of identification of form. ❧

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Be true to yourself

Care about what other people think and you will always be their prisoner. — Lao Tzu

Young children tend to equate approval with being loved. They further associate being loved with being a good person or being valued. Sadly, this thinking often persists into adulthood and even throughout one's life.

I think of this much like having a virus on your computer that compromises the ability of your hard drive to run programs in a most effective and efficient manner. It is ego that wants others to think positively of us and fears the disapproval of others. It is ego that worries how we are perceived by others and even projects critical perceptions onto others.

This can be totally immobilizing. An individual cannot act freely; he or she has to consider all the possible consequences of any word or actions on their part. Hours, if not days, may be spent reliving conversations or events, wondering what others are thinking. And this is intensified if there are people in one's life who actually do criticize or judge.

'Coming of age' as a wise adult who honours the essence of his or her being means transcending this ego level of dependence on the good opinion of others. It means coming to an understanding of who we really are and why we are here.

It is quite stunning to realize that, in all of history, there has never been, nor will there ever be, another human just like you. You are one of a kind in the entire universe. You are no accident!

When we live to please others, we are 'playing small.'

It is time to reveal the radiance of our own being.

All growth in nature, be it flowers, animals or birds is simply about growing into a complete manifestation of all that was in the 'seed' of that particular creation.

It need be no different for humans. What a joyous place this world would be if it was all about expressing our uniqueness and celebrating the diversity of all beings. That would be paradise. In our ego-driven world, that probably won't happen. However, in the world of our own consciousness we can make it so.

We need to opt out of the cultural paradigm established by the collective ego and form an unconditionally loving relationship with ourselves in which we give ourselves the freedom to be who we truly are, say what we really think and live how we want to live.

This is not being selfish, nor does it mean not caring about others. When we act in accordance with our highest good, it serves the highest good of all. Playing to the lowest common denominator only maintains the status quo.

Jesus did not care what others thought of him; nor did Gandhi, Buddha, Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King or Nelson Mandela. In fact, Mandela said things like, "I am the captain of my soul" and "As we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same."

When we live to please others, we are 'playing small.' It is time to reveal the radiance of our own being. Sure, there may be some who are blinded by the light of our authenticity. Just because Jesus got crucified doesn't mean he should not have expressed his truth. Gandhi said, "Great spirits have always been met with violent opposition from mediocre minds."

Go ahead; be brave and live in the fullness of your being. Your world is waiting. 

Gwen Randall-Young is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. For articles and information about her books, Deep Powerful Change Hypnosis CDs and new "Creating Healthy Relationships" series, visit www.gwen.ca

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substantially equivalent.

Q: Have they ignored the results of the Human Genome Project?

A: I think that the consequences of the Human Genome Project are conveniently ignored. As soon as you start questioning that, and you say, OK, there may be more than one protein in the plant other than the protein intended, you bring in the regulations from the FDA and they are very clear: that if you are putting something on the market that is not substantially equivalent, something that is a little bit different, something that has a new protein or proteins are a little bit different, or the nutrients are a little bit different, then automatically they must do testing. Since 1996, they have completely waived responsibility, saying it's completely substantially equivalent, claiming there are no differences, therefore companies don't even need to look at them or do any substantial testing for safety!

Q: The 2008 film *The World According to Monsanto* exposed the revolving door between the bio-tech industry and government.

A: I read that Dr. Shiv Chopra was offered a million dollars to close his eyes and sign off on the RBGH incident but he refused and was fired because he just wouldn't shut up. [Editor's Note: Drs. Shiv Chopra, Margaret Haydon and Gérard Lambert are former Health Canada scientists who were dismissed for "insubordination" in 2004 after publicly expressing serious reservations about the approval of products they believed would harm the food chain and ultimately threaten the well-being of Canadians. A cross Canada public speaking tour, starting in BC, with Dr. Chopra and Dr. Vrain, is in the planning stage for the second half of November.]

Q: Are you still in touch with some of your GE colleagues and are they aware of your turnabout?

A: No. You can now see how it is possible for scientists to ignore major sources of information.

Q: How can scientists operate independently when their paycheck depends on supporting a specific point of view?

A: When I started 30 years ago, I was given a lab, a technical assistant and a small budget and basically the game was play in the lab and make sure you publish and the more you publish, the better. So it was called 'publish or perish.' But something happened 25 years ago; the game changed. When I started, corporate sponsors were not allowed. I could not go to Monsanto and say, "Are you interested in me doing some work in my lab and for a small grant I could do research for you." But 25 years ago, it became allowed and then it became very strongly encouraged to seek corporate funding. The more Industry was interested in your project, the more outside money you could have. That was a sign that you were doing good work because you were getting extra funding so the government didn't have to give you money for your lab. So more and more that became the thing of the day, and, of course, there was lots of money for molecular biology. Others complained that all the money went to molecular biology in the late 80s and early 90s. Not only that, if you were successful and hit on a really good project, you could patent. So from 'publish or perish' we went to 'patent and get rich.'

Now a lot of scientists get grants from biotech companies. When you get a half a million dollar grant, you have

five graduate students, three post docs and a big lab and now you're professor so and so because you have a big lab with lots of money flowing. But if you publish results that are not acceptable to companies such as Monsanto, your corporate grant is going to dry up.

Q: I read in *Seeds of Deception* about the random insertion of the genes, that there is no way it can be precise, which you have confirmed. So why do scientists claim precision when genetically altering nature?

A: It is about the money. Again, it becomes very important for the biotech companies to push aside the studies that are not confirming the corporate line or questioning safety. But it's simpler. Most investors in the biotech companies just want to make money... it's the bottom line. They may think if they can get away with selling it then why not?

Q: Are they still getting away with it?

A: They are getting away with it. *You* may be questioning it; *you* may be avoiding GMOs and I certainly am and we may be kicking the giants. But, really, quite frankly, they (have no shame) buying the courts, the governments and the Senate.

Q: But they didn't fully buy everybody in Europe ... there's enough resistance in Europe.

A: No they didn't buy everyone in Europe, but they sure tried. There are basically about five countries in the world that grow GMO crops... India, Argentina, Canada, the US and a couple of others and there's some 20 countries that actually do not require labeling or have no restrictions. All over Europe there is labeling and as soon as you have labeling, there are no more GMOs because people don't want them.

Q: In Canada we are battling to stop GMO alfalfa and the non-browning apple.

A: The non-browning apple began in my lab in Summerland, BC. Somebody got the bright idea of how can we make money. Well, we were in apple country, so what about the technology out of Australia to silence the gene that browns the apple, and therefore have an apple that never goes brown? But the growers are against it and the organic growers are up in arms.

Q: You referred to a 120-page study *GMO Myths and Truths* released in June of 2012.

A: It's a document put together by genetic engineers Dr. Michael Antoniou and Dr. John Fagan with Claire Robinson, an investigative journalist. It's a compilation of articles and government reports, most of them questioning the safety of GMOs. It was published in June so the Seralini study wasn't in there. It represents a lot of work, mostly from independent labs in Europe and it shows GM crops don't yield more. It does go into what I call genetic pollution: that engineered crops are releasing their pollen so the genes are released in the environment, whether it's bacteria or other plants.

Q: If you have terminator genes, do they pollinate?

A: Terminator genes are an interference technology where the seed or pollen becomes infertile.

Q: So it's possible to pass on infertility?

A: Yes, it is. That's why so many people are concerned about it. Imagine if you had a field of corn with a gene for infertility and the gene spread around to the whole agricultural area and was picked up from other crops.

Q: So, in other words, pollen from a terminator plant

can turn another plant into another terminator plant... That could be the end of all life on Earth as we know it?


A: That's why Monsanto was stopped in 1995. They wanted to test and commercialize it. You see, the engineered crops are patented; corporations don't want people to keep [their own] seed because if farmers keep seeds, the patent holder loses money. You have to buy seeds every year from them. By making the seeds infertile, then nobody would keep the seeds. We are talking famine here ... insanity. But Monsanto did acquire the terminator technology and they might try bringing it out again.

Q: As somebody interested in quality food and how it is grown, are you hopeful?

A: My wife is a herbalist and works with our chef at the farm because we believe a healthy diet is incredibly important. We need that connection between what we eat and who we are. If you just go to the store and buy the cheapest food full of calories and very little nutrition, you're going to get sick.

CONCLUSION

This conversation with a GMO whistleblower was sobering. We now know uncomfortable truths about GMOs and the biotech companies that profit from them. In this interview, we learned from a former insider how genetic engineering is an imprecise technology, lacks safety tests, that GMO crops contaminate other crops, and how the scientific method gets abused for money. Dr. Thierry Vrain changed and is now an organic farmer. He realized that the way to feed the world is to create and support sustainable farms working with nature.

*It is our duty to stop biotech crime against nature. You can make a difference. Learn more and get involved. We are not alone. Participate with millions of people taking part in the **Global Day of Action Against GMOs** in more than 600 cities world-wide on **Saturday, October 12**. It is the biggest single event ever to take place opposing a Biotech Company. See more at www.march-against-monsanto.com *

Speaking Tour

GE Free BC and Greenpeace Vancouver are excited to announce "Genetically Engineered Foods and Human Health," a Canadian Speaker's Tour to spread awareness, educate and share concerns about genetically engineered foods. The cross-Canada tour features Dr. Thierry Vrain, a former genetic scientist for Agriculture Canada for 30 years and Dr. Shiv Chopra, a scientist who worked at Health Canada for 35 years, and a tireless protector of the food supply worldwide.

November 19

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Drs. Thierry Vrain and Shiv Chopra give a talk, Tuesday Nov. 19, 7PM, Canadian Memorial United Church in the Sanctuary. The church is next to the Centre for Peace, corner of 15th & Burrard. Free street parking. Bus Route 033. This is a by-donation event.

If you wish to help host, support or sponsor this tour, please call *Common Ground*. See details about events in your community at www.gefreebc.wordpress.com and www.cban.ca. Email GEFoods.Tour@gmail.com

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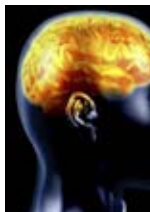
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From biology to spirituality

Sir Alister Hardy's quest

Text and photo-illustration by Geoff Olson



Charismatic and unconventional, Sir Alister Hardy believed in the value of transcendent human experiences. Photo courtesy the Alister Hardy Trust.

Two women, two entirely different stories of spiritual loss and renewal. The first woman was recovering from “a very distressing love affair” while staying with some friends and their children at a beach cottage. Months earlier in London, the mother of the family had given her suffering friend a book on Chinese philosophy: the *I Ching*. Although the book “quite impressed” her, the woman did not give it much more thought due to her preoccupations.

“Quite by chance – how important and strange that factor is – someone else gave me a copy of the very same book, just as I was about to leave for my holiday... For the next few days, I gave the book [my] fully, undivided attention and gradually I became aware that I had an explanation for the previously inexplicable, that there was an order in the intangible world of emotions, relationships and ‘happenings’ which followed a similar kind of order to things in the physical world. I realized that the natural (the nurturing of each in reference to

the other) could produce harmony of being, or ‘serenity’ if you like, and that God was overseer of this. This insight made Christianity comprehensible to me and I realized that contact with God had to be reinforced and strengthened as it was vital to achieving the desired harmony. The ritual of religion now had a meaning which is why I decided to go regularly to church.” (Church of England). *000463

Another woman was nearly 40 when she became “aware of having finally shaken off all the dreadful Christianity that pervaded everything in those times....” She contrasts her “delight with Nature” with her “completely phony” religion.

“Nothing I was given to read at school or at home helped at all; my real educational reading only began when I left school and could choose to read comparative religion, philosophy and science... I have entirely thrown off and repudiated my early religious feelings and ideas, thank goodness, and only when I had finally done so did I feel that I could be an honest, guiltless,

socially poised person. The life of deceit and double talk/think which I led as a child was miserable... If Prime Cause there be, I’m very sure it will be found to be a part of universal nature, not something ‘outside’. This belief is so reassuring because it removes God or whatever you call IT, from those damp distant clouds and brings it right here and all around. We are of one substance with the Universe and it won’t stop to let us get off whether alive or dead.” *000493

These two accounts seem to come from opposite poles of belief. Yet these women shared at least one thing in common. Years ago, they responded to a question posted in British newspapers by Sir Alister Hardy: “Have you ever experienced a presence or power, whether you call it God or not, which is different from your everyday self?”

The first woman found solace in the Church of England after reading an Eastern philosophical text. The second, as Hardy wrote in his 1979 book, *The Spiritual Nature of Man*, was a “person who might at first sight be thought by some to have changed against religion; it is clear, however, that she has moved from one form which was meaningless to her to another which provided her with a deep sense of spiritual reality.”

A marine biologist by training, Oxford professor Sir Alister Hardy was brilliant enough – or quixotic enough – to see common ground between the two stories. His famous “Hardy question” netted thousands of stories of religious, spiritual and paranormal experiences from men and women across the world, which are now archived at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David in Lampeter, Wales.

Lampeter, known to locals by its Welsh name Llanbedr Pont Steffan, is a Lilliputian market town nestled in the Kryptonite-coloured hills of West Wales. The small bakeries, restaurants and shops bracketing its winding streets are defiantly human-scale. As I wandered about the town square, I saw very few patrons and pedestrians with their noses stuck in digital devices. The most notable landmark in Lampeter is the university – the oldest campus in both Wales and England, apart from Oxford and Cambridge. I arrived here on a typical spring day in Wales, wet and overcast. The grey skies didn’t seem to bother the birds calling from the trees on the campus grounds. As I rolled my suitcase into the university’s front office, I heard a choir performing a madrigal in the concert room across the hall. Wales is renowned as a nation of singers, which is echoed in the people’s musical dialect.

The international reputation of the university for studies in philosophy and theology belies its small scale. This may be the reason it became home in 2000 to the world’s largest archive of religious, spiritual and psychic experiences, following the relocation of the Religious Experience Research Centre (RERC) from Oxford.

The 6,000-plus accounts in the archive's computerized database range from private revelations to beyond-words bliss to stunned shock to existential terror. A significant portion of the correspondents defined these experiences as life changing and many admitted never having communicated them to anyone until they corresponded with Alister Hardy's research centre. The experiences of some correspondents were prefaced by bereavement, grief or bodily and mental stress. Occasionally they followed fasting, meditation, prayer or the ingestion of psychoactive substances. But most of the accounts in the RERC archive were communicated by people reporting good health and stable moods. In these cases, there was often an inspiration/trigger in the outside world. It could be anything from a moving passage of music to an inspiring piece of art to the touch of another's hand. Frequently, it was an appreciation of nature and/or just a state of deep relaxation and contentment.

In a small, fluorescent-lit office in the campus library, I was given the privilege of researching the computer database of RERC accounts, with the guidance of Archive Supervisor Jean Matthews. No one person could hope to navigate this amount of text in the space of a few days. I was there to dip my toe, rather than swim the channel.

Born in 1896, Sir Alister Hardy is not what you'd today call a household name. He was a charismatic figure out of step with the intellectual climate of his time, a man who stood astride the 19th and 21st centuries. He had one foot in the stiff upper lip culture of the pre-war British bourgeoisie and another in today's postmillennial spirituality, yet he's all but forgotten now.

As a talented watercolourist and an expert in animal camouflage, the youthful Hardy was deemed a perfect fit for a top-secret department of the British Navy that specialized in disguising warships at sea. After a stint patrolling the Lincolnshire coast, he found himself tasked with designing so-called "dazzle-ships" – vessels painted in bright patterns that hid their profiles on the sea's horizon.

During this posting, he made the acquaintance of a medium by the name of Mrs. Wedgewood, who claimed to be clairvoyant. One day they met up for dinner. He later recalled how Mrs. Wedgewood had exclaimed, "Oh, what have you been doing? I see a large pink square on the table in front of you." Just hours earlier, at his top secret job, Hardy had taken a large sheet of white cardboard and painted it in a "most vivid pink distemper." He had stood with the dazzle ship design piece in his hands looking at it for minutes, waiting for it to dry.

"Again, I am quite certain that no one could have told Mrs. Wedgewood what I had been doing, for no one at the camouflage school knew her or knew that I was going out to dinner with her... From that time on, I must admit that I was myself, in my heart of hearts, convinced that telepathy was real; at the same time, I knew that my account was not scientifically good evidence and could not convince others."

Hardy was an empiricist at heart, who began with the most primary datum of experience: his own. Based on

his youthful experiences in the woods of Northamptonshire, he believed in the value of transcendent human experiences, which establishment culture generally addressed only in withering or dismissive terms.

The marine biologist's radical concept of human possibilities extended well beyond the primly maintained gardens of theology or the intellectual track fields of psychology, sociology and anthropology. "I think telepathy is just as great a discovery as gravity," he said in a 1971 BBC interview. "Linking together minds is something as fundamental in the universe as gravity."

When he came to Oxford at the peak of his career in the 1940s, "Alister felt that he needed to be much more circumspect, since he was well aware that some of his colleagues were extremely dismissive of religious beliefs as wrong-headed or infantile," observed colleague David Hay in his excellent biography, *God's Biologist: A Life of Alister Hardy*. As for his scientific



**I must admit that I was myself,
in my heart of hearts, convinced
that telepathy was real; at the
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evidence and could not convince
others. – Sir Alister Hardy**

opinion on psychic phenomenon, the marine biologist kept his mouth shut, although he remained a discreet member of the Society for Psychical Research for years.

It was not until his retirement in 1960 that Hardy felt secure enough to pursue the vow he made as a youth to what he called God: to reconcile science and spirituality in a manner acceptable to the academic world. To this end, he launched the Religious Experience Research Unit at Manchester College at Oxford. He was not particularly interested in psychic experience per se. Rather, he wanted to understand the larger context of spiritual experiences, whether or not they included so-called psychic component.

In his Gifford Lecture series, "The Living Stream," the retired prof argued for evolutionary theory, but against biological reductionism. Living creatures were more than just Darwin's wind-up toys and human spirituality was not merely a species-specific overshoot of primitive superstition, turbocharging tribalism and war, as Dawkins and others would argue decades later. To the contrary, these unusual states of mind often granted a fundamental sense of cosmic belonging. They created social capital by facilitating compassion and openness. Spirituality was often adaptive, not counteradaptive.

For all the intellectual errors and social crimes of organized religion –which Hardy acknowledged – the

private spiritual experiences of individuals 'worked' because they drew on something deeply embedded in the human psyche. Unfortunately, the marine biologist's musings went over like a lead balloon with most of his colleagues. "His words were taken as the amiable eccentricities of an otherwise brilliant man, and hence they were tolerated, then ignored," Hay noted in his biography of Hardy.

Trained as a zoologist, the aging scholar attempted a taxonomy of spiritual experiences, by breaking the stories gathered in the growing RERU archives down into discrete categories with cross-referenced patterns, similar to the way he had identified and categorized zooplankton as a younger man in his beautifully illustrated books on marine life. His efforts were suggestive, but incomplete. In his 1971 BBC interview, Hardy noted that most of the reports gathered by his research team were from Britain, the US and Western European countries. "But I'm hoping later on to get many from the Oriental countries. When I've got more money, I can actually have the help of oriental scholars."

On his 89th birthday, Hardy received a telephone call informing him he had won the Templeton Prize, considered to be the Nobel Prize of science-and-spirituality studies. Months after Hardy's surprise birthday gift, 700 guests gathered at London Guildhall for the awards ceremony. The Duke of Norfolk arose to tell the audience that Sir Alister was unable to attend, after suffering a severe brain hemorrhage the day before the presentation. Hardy passed away a few days after the awards.

Money from the Templeton Prize, which was funnelled into the Alister Hardy Trust, allowed the marine biologist's objectives to outlive him. In 2007, professors Paul Badham and Xinzhong Yao released the results of a study on the religious experiences among China's population, which not only fulfilled the wish Hardy expressed in the 1971 BBC interview, but also supported his thesis on the universality of patterns in human spiritual experience.

In the end, Hardy's work was unwelcome at both poles of culture, by religious ideologues and scientific materialists alike. He argued that human beings are more than just bags of protoplasm with a best-before date, struggling to survive in a random, meaningless cosmos, but he did so within the constraints of evolutionary theory. He also believed science could give credence to personal spiritual experiences, as beneficial states of mind, if not glimpses into a wider reality in which we are embedded.

Hardy's colleague David Hay notes the host of expressions of love and gratitude after Hardy's death, some of them preserved in the archive of the Bodleian Library. Writes one former student: "His greatness seems to me in some way linked to his childlike approach to life, his tremendous respect for, and wonder at every tiny part. I wish I could have known him better, but I am very grateful for having known him at all."

*Accounts from the Alister Hardy Religious Experience Research Centre archive.

www.geoffolson.com

Open a book

Welcome to a new section in *Common Ground*

by Bruce Mason

You're in good company. What you are doing right now – reading – is the most popular activity of people who pick up a copy of *Common Ground*. It's also a keen interest of this magazine's contributors. So it makes sense to launch a monthly book section where we can begin an ongoing conversation, share information and explore our common ground.

Just like muscles, the brain benefits from a good workout. And reading is more neuro-biologically demanding than processing images or speech. "Parts of the brain that have evolved for other functions – such as vision, language and associative learning – connect in a specific neural circuit for reading, which is very challenging," says Ken Pugh, PhD, president and director of research of Haskins Laboratories, devoted to the science of language and affiliated with Yale. "A sentence is shorthand for a lot of information that must be inferred by the brain," Pugh notes.

While reading, your intelligence and greater concentration is called to action. "We are forced to construct, to produce narrative, to imagine," explains Maryanne Wolf, director of the Center for Reading and Language Research at Tufts University and author of *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain*. "Typically, when you read, you have more time to think. Reading gives you a unique pause button for comprehension and insight. By and large, with oral language – when you watch a film or listen to a tape – you don't press pause."

In our internet-crazed world, our attention is drawn in myriad directions simultaneously, as we multitask through the day. In a five-minute span, the average person divides their time between working on a task, checking email, chatting with people (via gchat, Skype, etc.), keeping an eye on Twitter, monitoring their smartphone, interacting with co-workers and so on.

The mental activity of reading is an antidote to all that. It keeps our memory sharp, our learning capacity nimble and our minds harder as we age. So despite all the high-tech alternatives, don't close the book completely. Print should be part of your life too. Just processing words boosts your brain. A literate mind is more complex. "There's a richness that reading gives you," Wolf says, "an opportunity to probe more than any other medium. Reading is about not being content with the surface."

You are probably aware of the many benefits of reading and have firsthand experience of the sheer joy of curling up on a rainy afternoon with a cup of something warm and shutting out the world beyond the pages of a literary classic, poems, magazines, biographies, self-help guides, street lit and so on.

Learning a new language, lingering in a bookstore (when you can find one) or library, pleasurably passing

time on a SkyTrain, bus, plane, ferry or at a food court or on a park bench – here's a short list of some of the reasons it's wise as well as enjoyable to do these things. The brain requires exercise. Use it or lose it. Cognitive stimulation slows the progress and possibly prevents Alzheimer's and dementia.

Reading reduces stress, transporting you to other realms, engaging or distracting you while keeping you in the moment. It increases your knowledge – something that can't be taken away from you – along with



Just like muscles, the brain benefits from a good workout. And reading is more neuro-biologically demanding than processing images or speech.

improving your vocabulary, making you more articulate and well-spoken, boosting confidence and self-esteem, as well as raising awareness.

While reading, you have to remember characters, history, previous events, plots and sub-plots. And every new memory created forges new synapses and pathways in the brain and strengthens existing ones, assisting in short-term memory recall as well as stabilizing moods and putting critical and analytical skills to work.

Books – including ebooks – focus attention, enhance concentration and improve writing skills in much the same way as exposure to music enhances the ability to play. Reading can also help bring about inner peace and tranquillity, lowering blood pressure and reducing mood disorders.

Best for last: reading offers free entertainment. You

will never run out of material at your local library, which stocks every subject and genre imaginable. Books are also available in PDF or ePub format for e-readers, iPads and computers. And there are lots of online sources to download inexpensive or free e-books.

A new book – *The Novel Cure: An A-Z of Literary Remedies* (by Ella Berthoud and Susan Elderkin, published by Hamish Hamilton) – is being released next month. This 400-page apothecary, gathered from 2,000 years of literature, makes the case that there is something in libraries and bookstores to cure whatever ails you: from agoraphobia to boredom to midlife crisis and problems of the body and the heart. It cites the best post-breakup books, the top 10 to read in your twenties, the best novel on motherhood, etc. Read at the right time, books possess the power to change life.

Cowardly? Get a copy of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Fear death? Try *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. Stuck? Pick up *Life of Pi*.

Cure or solace, you aren't alone while reading. And you are opening up the power on the page to transport you and change how you think about the world and your place in it.

Arguably, more than anyone else in Canada, Shelagh Rogers has conversed about books on flagship CBC-radio programs such as *Morningside*, *Sounds Like Canada*, *This Morning* and now, *The Next Chapter*. In a *Common Ground* interview to be published in the near future, she said, "I'm surrounded

by books and never without one or two to suggest what to make for dinner, fight depression or learn the real history of Canada. In a canoe, on a camping trip, in a bathtub or a chair, I am constantly turning down the corner of pages for future reference. And I give them to a library which is important to me.

"You can tell a great deal about people by what they're reading and what they keep in their bookcases, books they love and keep, to reflect on and can't bear to part with, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, for example," she added. "People write off books at their peril. They take us out of our own world and beyond individual horizons. And studies show readers have an increased capacity for empathy and greater understanding of other peoples' lives."

Books never sleep or laugh at your ignorance or mistakes. They ask very little and give so much, without demanding payment. And they contain the past, present and future glory of the world. In the months to come, *Common Ground* will share conversations with writers and readers, visit bookstores and literary events, share trends, research, new releases and old favourites. Join in on our website or by emailing brucemason@shaw.ca.

Bruce Mason is a Vancouver and Gabriola-Island based five-string banjo player, gardener, freelance writer and author of *Our Clinic*.

photo © Tamara Bauer

The Salmon People

by Thomas King

Excerpted from chapter nine – “As Long as the Grass is Green” – of *The Inconvenient Indian* by Thomas King (Doubleday Canada).

The Northwest coast is one of my favourite places in the world. I’ve spent a good deal of time along the northern California coast, the Oregon and Washington coasts, and, in particular, the coast of British Columbia. I like the fog and the gloomy, cool weather and I have a long-lived love affair with the ocean that makes me prone to multi-syllable adjectives. But if I were required to find a single noun to describe this part of the planet, it would be “fish.” Salmon. In fact, many of the tribes in the Northwest refer to themselves as the “Salmon People.” The salmon have been coming up the rivers along the Northwest coast for millennia. They are one of the staple foods and figure heavily in the language and the cultural life of the Native people along these waterways.

By 1854, Europeans had settled in numbers in the Puget Sound area of Washington Territory. In that year, the territorial governor, Isaac Stevens, was able to impose a treaty – the Treaty of Medicine Creek – on the Nisqually, the Puyallup, the Steilacoom, the Squawshik, the Squaxin Island and other western tribes, a treaty that forced the tribes to give up most of their good farming land in exchange for \$32,500 and the promise that they could continue to fish. One of the Nisqually chiefs, a man named Leschi, objected to the treaty and the loss of land. Skirmishes broke out between Indians and Whites and the conflict turned into what history likes to call the Puget Sound War.

Puget Sound War sounds more dramatic than it was. Few people died on either side, but Stevens, outraged that the Nisqually would resist his land grab and angered over the deaths of two of his militiamen, sent troops to capture Leschi. No one knew for sure if Leschi had anything to do with the deaths of the two men, but it didn’t matter. Leschi’s real crime was his resistance to White desires and on February 19, 1858, he was hanged. Whites were quick to take over the land that the Treaty of Medicine Creek had given them and slow to honour their promises, particularly the promise about fishing rights, and for the next hundred years, the matter of fishing rights would be a continuing irritant to Indian-White relations.

Any question about fishing rights should have been

settled by the Medicine Creek Treaty, and, if not by that treaty, then by two U.S. Supreme Court cases, *United States v. Winans* (1905) and *Swifert Brothers Co. v. United States* (1919). In both these cases, the central question was whether Indians had access to the rivers of the Northwest and whether they could fish as they had been accustomed to fishing. And in each of the cases, the court ruled that Native people indeed had those rights. Yet in 1945, a fourteen-year-



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old Nisqually named Billy Frank, Jr., was arrested for fishing on the Nisqually River. Frank had the right to fish, guaranteed by treaty. That right had been upheld in at least two Supreme Court cases, but for the next twenty-nine years that right would be ignored by Washington State officials. Maybe they were fans of Andrew Jackson.

Just in case anyone has forgotten, Georgia, in the late 1820s and early 1830s, was hell-bent on removing the Cherokee from the state. Then, in 1832, the U.S. Supreme Court under John Marshall, in *Worcester v. Georgia*, ruled that states had no power or author-

ity to pass laws that affected “domestic, dependent” Indian Nations.

That decision should have put Georgia’s plans on hold, but Andrew Jackson, who was president at the time and sympathetic to Georgia, pushed ahead with the forced removal of the Cherokee anyway. “Marshall has made his decision,” Jackson is credited with saying, “now let him enforce it.” But perhaps Washington State officials weren’t thinking of Jackson. Perhaps they just decided, like Jackson, that when it came to a matter of land and natural resources, a bunch of Indians, treaty or no, Supreme Court decisions or no, weren’t going to set the rules of engagement.

In 1954, a Puyallup named Bob Satiacum was arrested for illegally fishing along the Puyallup River. He was convicted, but, in 1957, on appeal, the Washington State Supreme Court overturned the conviction. However, the matter of who could fish and who controlled the fishing was far from settled, and in no time at all, the rivers of the Northwest became the site of “fish-ins,” as tribes pushed to have their fishing rights recognized and reaffirmed.

During these “fish-ins,” Indians went fishing with a vengeance. Game wardens arrested them, destroyed their equipment and confiscated their boats. While the Indians were fishing and the wardens were arresting, courts of various jurisdictions were busy turning out a flurry of rulings. In 1960, the Pierce County Superior Court ruled that the Puyallup tribe didn’t exist. Another ruling denied the existence of the Puyallup reservation. In 1963, in *Washington v. McCoy*, the court upheld the right of the state to subject Indians to reasonable and necessary regulations.

The fishing wars escalated quickly. Hollywood celebrities such as Marlon Brando, Buffy Sainte-Marie and Dick Gregory came to the Northwest to help call attention to Indian fishing rights.

The National Indian Youth Council showed up. Many of the fishing protests were led by the Survival of American Indians Association (SAIA), an organization formed out of the dispute itself.

Neither side was willing to back down. Native people wanted their fishing rights as guaranteed by treaty. But neither the Department of Fish and Game nor the state’s sports fishery associations were willing to allow the power to regulate any part of

continued p.26...



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OCT 5

40 Million Salmon Can't Be Wrong: A musical
multimedia stage show to bring back the fish.
Show and tour kick off October 5, 8PM, Blue Frog
Studios, 1328 Johnston Road, Whiterock. Tickets
at bluefrogstudios.net or call 604-385-4667.

OCT 12

March Against Monsanto in Vancouver. Meet
at 10AM at the Vancouver Art Gallery, 750
Hornby Street. Bring your friends & family.
Bring signs & wear costumes. Bring your
passion. www.march-against-monsanto.com

OCT 15

Last Free Open House of the year before
Shamanic Power Initiation Program starts
in Nov. Hosted by the Institute of Shamanic
Medicine. 7:30PM, Vancouver. To RSVP, email:
info@shamanicmedicine.ca or call
778-227-2939. www.shamanicmedicine.ca

OCT 15-20

"Living the New Economy" – A 6-day
confluence of people and ideas to connect the
dots, meld minds, cross disciplines and build
bridges. Performance Works, Granville Island,
Vancouver. http://vancouver.neweconomy.ca
Facebook: www.facebook.com/LNEyvr
www.twitter.com/lneyvr

OCT 16

**Free talk: "Love your Liver – The ABCs of
Viral Hepatitis."** Hosted by Canadian Liver
Foundation. 6-7PM, Vancouver Public Library,
350 West Georgia - Alma VanDusen Room,
Lower Level. No pre-registration required.

OCT 17

Jami Sieber, electric cellist. "Timelessness"
CD release concert, 7:30PM. Celebrating
her music/work/life with Thailand's rescued
elephants. Tx/Info: www.soundsandfuries.com

OCT 18-20

Introduction to Ear Reflexology commences
Certificate Weekend Training Course.

Introduction 7:30PM, \$10; Course \$395 + GST.
Pacific Institute of Reflexology, (604) 875-8818,
www.pacificreflexology.com

OCT 19

Free talk: The riddle of evil. Where does evil
come from? Why do bad things happen & how
can they be healed? Christian Science healer
Kari Mashos, 11AM. Woodland Hall, VanDusen
Garden, 5251 Oak St., 604 733-4310.

OCT 19-26

Bandoneon/Accordion Events with world
renowned Maestro Peter Soave (from France!)
Concerts and Masterclasses in Victoria.
250-721-1101, www.members.shaw.ca/
AccordionStudent/Events/Events.html

OCT 20

Free Class – 7PM "Regenerative Nutrition" by
Dr. Neil Tessler. Meditation & Ecology Centre,
11011 Shell Rd., Richmond. Info/Registration:
Linda, 604-985-5840. Drop-ins welcome.

OCT 20

**Shaman Women, Plant Medicine and
Psychedelics**, 12-6PM, Labatt Hall, SFU
Harbourfront Campus, 515 W. Hastings St.,
Vancouver, Tickets/\$30 Banyen Books. Info:
www.visionarycongress.org

OCT 26

Spend one day in Africa: An African Healing
Dance Retreat for Women followed by The
Spirit of the Village Annual Event to nurture the
entire community. www.JackyEssombe.com

OCT 26-27

Spirit Plant Medicine Conference: Films,
lectures, ceremonies & discussions about
ayahuasca, iboga, cannabis, peyote, psilocybin,
mushrooms, San Pedro and other Spirit Plant
Medicine. University of BC (UBC). Starting at
\$111/entire weekend. Tx/info at 604-644-4447
or www.spiritplantmedicine.com.

OCT 25-27

Divine Healing Hands Certification Workshops.
Friday 10-6PM, Centre for Peace, 1825 W.16th
Ave, Vancouver. Sat & Sun 10-6PM, 1280 Odium
Dr., Vancouver. www.lovepeaceharmonybc

OCT 27

Free Intro Workshop – 2PM: Jyoti (Inner Light)
"Meditation & Positive Mysticism." Meditation
& Ecology Centre, 11011 Shell Rd., Richmond.
Info/Registration: Linda, 604-985-5840.

OCT 27

J.Krishnamurti in Beyond Myth and Tradition
series with Evelyn Blau: Death-Leaving
the Stream. Free DVD showing, dialogue,
refreshments. Church of Truth, Victoria,
BC. 1:30 PM! Look us up on and register at
www.meetup.com/The-British-Columbia-
Krishnamurti-Group/ krishnamurtigroup@live.
com, 604-354-1534.

OCT 27

Reclaiming Samhain Ritual & Spiral Dance:
Maritime Labour Centre, 1880 Triumph St.,

Vancouver. Door 6:15PM, Starts 7PM, \$25-\$15
(Cash Only). www.vancouverreclaiming.org

OCT 30-NOV 2

"Moving from the Organs" with Master Yoga
teacher Judith Lasater. A deeper exploration of
yoga asana not commonly taught. For teachers
& students. www.soulspringwellness.ca,
604-649-8522.

NOV 1-3

An Oasis for Your Spiritual Journey upcoming
retreat. "Living Inquiry" with Scott Kiloby,
author & teacher. Demystifying the message of
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www.swanwickcentre.ca

NOV 1-3

The Body Soul & Spirit Expo: Vancouver
Fall Expo. Over 120 exhibits. 45 workshops
& lectures. At the PNE Forum. Fri 3-9PM,
Sat 10-7PM, Sun 11-6PM. Tickets \$15, \$35/
weekend pass. www.bodysoulspiritexpo.com
1-877-560-6830.

NOV 2

Open House - Institute of Holistic Nutrition
(Vancouver): Course/Career opportunities,
exhibits, lectures & more. 10AM-3:30PM, 604
West Broadway, Ste. 300.
www.instituteofholisticnutrition.com

NOV 2

Brahma Kumaris Meditation Centre: Join us for
celebration of Diwali – the Festival of Light, to
bid farewell to the old and celebrate the new;
to bid farewell to the ordinary and celebrate the
spiritual awakening of inner light. Everyone is
welcome. No charge. 604-436-4795,
www.brahmakumaris.org

NOV 5

Chuck Spezzano Evening "Secret Healing
Principles" Unity Church, 5840 Oak Street
7-10PM. Tickets \$30 Banyen Books. Online \$25,
www.chuckspezzanoevening.eventbrite.ca

NOV 9 & NOV 23

Grof Holotropic Breathwork Daylong Intensive:
Directly access source energy for mind/body/
spirit transformation. \$125 earlybird, UBC. NOV
23: Vancouver Island. Pre-register at
www.theseretofbreath.com

NOV 9-10

Vancouver Health Show: Vancouver Convention
Centre, Canada Place. Sat:10AM-6PM; Sun:
11AM-5PM. Over 100 exhibitors with cutting
edge health products & info. Tickets \$12,
Weekend pass \$18. www.thehealthshows.com

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Society for a GE Free BC, Greenpeace Vancouver and Common Ground co-sponsor this tour to raise awareness and educate. The Tour features: Dr. Thierry Vrain, former Agriculture Canada scientist for 30 yrs, with Dr. Shiv Chopra, former Health Canada scientist for 35 yrs and a tireless protector of the food supply worldwide.

Many communities are showing interest in the event: Campbell River, Duncan, Nanaimo, Sooke, Victoria, Creston, Grand Forks, Kamloops, Kaslo, Kelowna, Langley, Nelson, Penticton, Salmon Arm, Squamish, Tri-Cities, Vancouver, Vernon, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Brooks, Calgary, Edmonton, As well as communities in Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritimes in January and February. **To host an event or more information:**

GEFoods.Tour@gmail.com
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Emmylou Harris & Rodney Crowell

Connection and chemistry at the heart of *Old Yellow Moon*



Harris and Crowell bonded over sibling harmonies such as the Louvin Brothers and the Everly Brothers, internalizing them, creating another dimension as compelling as their solo voices.

There's a resounding buzz across Europe and North America around the Emmylou Harris/Rodney Crowell *Old Yellow Moon* tour. Folks who have experienced the two-and-a-half-hour show are using words like "epic" to describe online what they shared live in Paris, New York, London and LA, from Berlin to Belfast, Toronto, Quebec and Ottawa.

The long-awaited recorded collaboration earlier this year was four decades in the making. Subsequent performances – including six cities in Western Canada in early November – are something else, a showcase of deep connections and a sum much greater than its considerable parts.

Even the opening act is special, featuring Richard Thompson, whose seminal work with Fairport Convention in the early 70s led to inspired songwriting and performance standards and a nod from *Rolling Stone* as one of the "20 Greatest Guitarists."

But it's vocal harmony and unique chemistry that are the heart and essence of international encores, what Emmylou calls a "celebration of a 40-year friendship." She has recorded more than 25 albums and earned 12 Grammy Awards. The most prominent harmony vocalist of our time and go-to-girl, her voice has blended elegantly with everyone from Bob Dylan, to Neil Young, Dolly Parton and Linda Ronstadt in Trio, Elvis Costello, Ladysmith Black Mambazo, Roy Orbison and Mark Knopfler, among others.

"From the first time Rodney and I sat down on a floor and across a kitchen table, messing around with two guitars and our two lead voices, it was obvious and

inevitable that we'd be friends, cohorts and collaborators," Emmylou recalls.

"Two unique voices in a duet can create a third voice, like nothing that has ever existed before. Obviously, the songs have to be good, but like instruments that add emotion and shading, voices raised together create some kind of joy. And being joyful at 20, or being joyful at 60, it's still joy," she adds.

Crowell, a songwriter's writer and singer is also a multi-Grammy Award winner. His work has been recorded by the likes of Johnny Cash, Bob Seger, Norah Jones, Etta James and the Grateful Dead. In 1988, his *Diamonds & Dirt* album generated five #1 singles. The 2010 publication of his memoir, *Chinaberry Sidewalks*, earned global acclaim and a recent recording, *KIN*, with fellow author Mary Karr, debuted at #1 on Americana and Country charts.

"If the songs are good, you get to lay it on the line and deliver a worthy performance," he reports. "You don't think about, it but lose yourself in the moment. Get in there unconsciously and the chances of achieving something somewhat timeless go up exponentially.

"Come up to snuff enough times and you've got a record. Everything else is precious and I guess it's a commitment to the art of the song that we can offer to an audience." Crowell describes Harris as having "the soul of a poet and the voice of an angel and a cowgirl with a broken heart."

Back in 1967, as an aspiring folksinger, she had arrived in New York expecting to meet Dylan, Baez, et al. But the scene had moved on, a marriage also faded quickly and as a single mother she also had to work as a waitress.

"Music was a way to make a living, the only thing I knew how to do well," she recalls. "I didn't have focus, direction, passion or a point of departure until I started making music with Gram Parsons. That's when everything started to come together."

However, her mentor and soul mate would overdose on heroin, leaving behind a legacy and a still lingering influence on everything from alt.country to the Rollin' Stones.

"All of a sudden, the lights were turned out and I had to figure out how to make my own way in the dark. Through Gram and osmosis, I had developed an ability to hear the beauty and the poetry, the restraint that is in music and gives it its power," Emmylou says.

In 1974, shortly after Parson's tragic demise, while struggling with her debut solo album, *Pieces of the Sky*, Harris first heard the then unknown songwriter Rodney Crowell on a demo tape. "In the first few bars of *Blueberry Wine*, something went boom, something in his voice,

in the music and the energy that was there," Harris recalls what became the opening track, later prompting an invitation and air plane ticket to join what would become her legendary Hot Band.

Crowell says, "I went out and stayed seven years. We started touring with Elvis Presley's band when he wasn't working, hippie kids working with really high-price musicians like James Burton, Glen Hardin and Emory Gordy.


"We were young and foolish and that was lovely and the world was all out in front of us. We found our voice so many years ago, a certain tone we can get. Now that we finally got together again, it's as if no time had passed. We're blood in that way, a blend more about chemistry than precision."

Harris and Crowell bonded over sibling harmonies such as the Louvin Brothers and the Everly Brothers, internalizing them, creating another dimension as compelling as their solo voices – a classic pairing as unique and shimmering as the similarly influenced Simon and Garfunkel or Lennon and McCartney.

Blueberry Wine was revisited and revised on *Old Yellow Moon*. "I wrote it when I was 20 and knew I could do better. The writer's best friend is revision and now it's a little more in keeping with my current sensibilities. In some ways, we were sillier when we were younger, and we took things like this for granted. This process, this day's work, is a bigger blessing than we understood it to be back then," Rodney says.

The passage of time – time well spent, time misspent – is a recurring motif on *Old Yellow Moon*, including Matraca Berg's heartbreaking lament for lost youth *Back When We Were Beautiful* and Crowell's own preternaturally wise *Here We Are*.

Travelling back and forth across their careers and shared and separate history, listeners are offered rare balance and authenticity as well as an acknowledgement of the artist's maturity and fallen comrades, such as Parsons and Harris' touching farewell to Kate McGarrigle.

Sometimes mournful or timelessly yearning, anything but nostalgic, sometimes rollicking, *Old Yellow Moon*, the album and upcoming concerts, showcase the deep connections between ever evolving musical powerhouses, right now. 

Concert dates for Emmylou Harris and Rodney Crowell, with Richard Thompson:

Nov 6: Vancouver: Orpheum Theatre. **Nov 8:** Nanaimo: Port Theatre. **Nov 9:** Victoria: Alix Gooldeen Hall. **Nov 11:** Edmonton: Jubilee Theatre. **Nov 12:** Calgary: EPCOR Centre. **Nov 14:** Winnipeg: Burton Cummings Theatre. Tickets through www.ticketmaster.ca

Bruce Mason is a Vancouver and Gabriola-Island based five-string banjo player, gardener, freelance writer and author of *Our Clinic*. brucemason@shaw.ca

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